

Dreams
cast in resin

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Shopping the
south side

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A taste of
Shaanxi

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Fairytale world returns to China



The current socio-political and economic climate is a starting point for much of Ai Weiwei's art. He uses local materials and resources to realize his vision.

At his latest solo exhibition in 798, Ai brings two works created for 2006's Biennale of Sydney and 2007's Documenta in Kassel.

The first, a cotton *World Map*, is his obvious commentary on China's prominence in global trade. *Fairytale*, the second, was a project and piece which took 1,001 ordinary people to the outside world for the first time.

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contestant a
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smile for
sick children

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Hiring confidence returns in fourth quarter

By Jin Zhu

Employers in Beijing are showing stronger hiring intentions for the last quarter, according to a survey published September 8 by Manpower Inc., the world's leading employment service provider.

The survey was based on interviews with 4,216 employers; 17 percent of respondents said they planned to recruit more people in the upcoming quarter. In Beijing, Chongqing, Dalian, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Wuhan, Xi'an, Qingdao, Tianjin, Suzhou and Hangzhou,

the hiring confidence was the strongest among enterprises, the survey said.

Among 747 privately run enterprises, state-owned enterprises and foreign-funded enterprises in Beijing, 20 percent said they would hire more people this quarter.

"Companies are gaining more confidence after the market's recovery in the first half of the year. Some of the surveyed enterprises that are taking a wait-and-see attitude toward economic prospects while others are starting to add to their workforces in

preparation for the market's full recovery," Danny Yuan, managing director for Manpower China, said.

According to the survey, positive hiring prospects were reported by all industries. Among them, employers in finance, insurance, real estate and the service industry reported the strongest hiring intentions for the next three months.

"The manufacturing labor market is recovering at a faster pace, with a 6 percent increase in the third quarter. Employers in mining and construction are also

showing positive hiring trends," Yuan said.

Yuan said the crisis also taught companies the real value of flexible employment in the current economic situation. "To improve response to fluctuating business needs, companies are utilizing temps to avoid unnecessary costs created from workforce redundancy or to mitigate the constraints presented by a headcount budget," he said.

Meanwhile, the lower costs and market expansion have attracted many companies to

relocate or expand to second-tier cities within China, which creates a high demand for talent there, the survey said.

"Cities including Shenzhen, Chongqing, Qingdao, Wuhan and Hangzhou are showing stronger hiring intentions, among which, Shenzhen reports 18 percent growth. It will be the most attractive city for the rest of the year," Yuan said.

More attention should also be paid to second-tier cities where there is a high demand for talent and huge potential development, he said.

Lucky day packs Beijing's wedding registry



Couples who registered for marriage Wednesday set a new one-day record for the city.

CFP Photo

By Han Manman

There was a rush of weddings Wednesday as couples hoped to draw good luck from the auspicious triple nines in the date September 9, 2009.

Nearly 19,000 couples stood in long queues to register for marriage Wednesday, setting the highest one-day record in six decades, government statistics shows.

The number 999 signifies longevity and everlasting love, which many hope will translate into marital bliss. In Chinese, 9 is pronounced as "jiu," a homonym for "everlasting."

"We were waiting for this specific day for a long time,"

Wang Zhenchu, a 30-year-old lawyer, said. The couple decided to get married this April, but postponed their registration until this Wednesday hoping for good luck.

"I got in line on Tuesday night and we registered early Wednesday morning. There were so many people standing in front of me," Wang said. Some people got in line as early as Tuesday afternoon.

"We never saw so many couples register in one day. It's a new record for our bureau," Li Yanmei, from the Haidian District civil affairs bureau, said.

She said the Haidian marriage registry office received nearly

4,000 couples on Wednesday. "We added more workers and had to open 20 temporary windows to accept the registrations," she said, adding that their staff started work just after midnight.

The marriage reservation system also helped a lot. "Normally it takes 10 minutes to handle the whole procedure, but we set up a reservation system to collect information in advance. This cut the time to three minutes."

However, some also felt trouble during the wedding rush.

"So many couples want to get married on this 'lucky day' that it makes for quite the opposite; there's so much trouble making

wedding plans because everyone's busy fighting for the good hotels," Zhang Chen, manager of a wedding planner agency in Beijing, said.

Beijing enjoyed a similar wedding boom August 8 last year. Abbreviated as 08/08/08, that day was also considered lucky because it sounds like the world for "wealth" in Chinese. About 15,646 couples wedded in Beijing that day.

As the lucky days 08/08/08 and 09/09/09 have passed, many young people are now looking to 10/10/10, which means perfection in all, and 11/11/11, which means wholeheartedness.

Foreign-invested companies allowed to list

The government is gradually reducing its limits on equity stake proportion in investment from overseas companies, allowing qualified foreign-invested enterprises to get listed in the local stock market, Chen Deming, minister of commerce, said Tuesday.

The move expands cooperation between China and foreign countries, innovating investment avenues and optimizing foreign investment structures, Chen said at the 13th China International Fair for Investment and Trade (CIFIT) in Xiamen, Fujian Province, without saying when it will take effect.

Used foreign direct investment (FDI) has declined consecutively for 10 months since last October as a result of the global economic downturn. The country's FDI dropped by 20.4 percent year-on-year to \$48.4 billion in the first seven months this year, data from the Ministry of Commerce showed.

China will promote the opening up of the service industry and speed up the construction of economic and technological development zones to enhance mutual investment and contribute a dynamic force to the shrinking global economy, Chen said.

He said it will encourage foreign companies to develop high technology, promote outsourcing and support investment in clean technology, energy saving and environmental protection.

(Xinhua)

Taobao fights reputation spam in e-business boom

By Annie Wei

Online shopping has become the younger generation's main spending channel. Everything can be found at a cheaper cost and with home delivery, saving on cab fares.

According to iResearch.com, an online marketing and research firm, China's buyer-to-buyer business

reached 3 trillion yuan in 2008 and 100 billion of it was on Taobao.

More and more people are trying to open their own stores online, experiencing e-business first-hand and dreaming of self-employment. Somehow, some vendors decided to cheat the system in the face of intense competition.



Taobao's conference in Beijing to discuss the future of e-business with top sellers.

CFP Photo

Taobao's credit system is designed for buyers and sellers to comment on each other and have the comments serve as a reference for other Internet users.

Some companies and individuals are taking advantage of this system to assist others in boosting their

credit to make a profit, giving way to the growth of a grey industry.

Therefore, Taobao.com called on its 130 million users to join a campaign to fight against online credit fraud. It asked its members to conduct a self-inspection of their

credit records and remove all false information by combining their own inspection with Taobao's internal audit.

Currently, more than 3,000 vendors on Taobao have deleted their fake comments and Taobao announced it would shut down 2,209 stores by September 8.

Credit-boosting is not the future

Du Pengyun, 27, founder of Webgle.com, announced his company officially moved out of the credit boosting business at the end of July.

Du started the business in 2006, when he found that the credit value was the main reference for Taobao buyers. A vendor with a high credit score normally has good business, while vendors with a poor credit score were ignored by buyers. After a while, vendors with poor credits find it too hard to maintain the business and have to shut down the shop.

Then Du developed his credit-boosting business. Previously, Du claimed that his business held 70 percent of the market.

Du said there were two methods to increase credits, the first being slow: "We organized sellers who wanted to increase their credit together, having them auction off other's products through our platform," Du said.

Du said these sellers were from different provinces with different IP addresses. One member would auction another's product once, paying for the product. This way, the seller does not actually sell the product. The procedure appears to be an ordinary transaction, rendering it untraceable.

Du's other method was faster.

The sellers would pay for their own products. "These sellers are normally part-timers. We would hire some full-time people to auction their products," Du said.

Like everything profitable in China, more small companies copied Du's business and offered the same service online.

Du said that what other credit boosting companies currently offer was similar to the above. "In March, the situation peaked," Du said. "Over thousands of vendors faked their credit score, and hundreds of companies and individuals provided credit-boosting service."

According to Taobao's credit system, the lowest credit is "red heart," the second level "diamond" and the highest "crown." A good rating from one shopper is equal to one score, and every four to 10 score is one "red heart." When a vendor breaks 250, he is awarded a diamond – at 10,000 he gets a crown.

In 2007, it cost 10,000 yuan to boost a member's credit score to a crown, with a 30 percent profit margin and some with 70 to 80 percent. In 2008, more people became involved in this service, dropping the fee for a crown to 7,000 to 8,000 yuan. Finally, in 2009, some people only asked only several hundred yuan.

Vendors need more e-marketing help

Du said that when he first started his credit-boosting business, he only aimed to help vendors who lack marketing awareness to survive in the business, in a very carefully controlled way.

Lao Yuyan, 31, an apparel seller from South China, said she would delete her fake credit. "What I did was a long time ago. I do not think they can find any clues from the system, but I think it is better to be honest."

Lao opened the apparel shops online last year, as she had a high school classmate working in an apparel factory in Shenzhen. Lao also had her full time job, working in the accounting department of a

local real estate company.

However, Lao's dream of a successful online business never came true. "There are so many vendors on Taobao selling women's apparel." Her other friends also warned her that it was an easy thing to open a store on Taobao, but making a profit was a different story.

It was a catch-22: if buyers seldom ordered products from stores with little credit, then how could a store have enough credit to entice buyers?

Then, Lao quickly got online messages from companies and individuals who claimed they would boost her store's credit within a short time. "At first, I did not

believe it," Lao said. But, she felt that she had to try something and paid a website 300 yuan to get a "diamond."

Within 20 days, Lao's store was rated as "diamond" and her business quickly improved. Lao said she never cheated again after that. Lao, who is spending more time on her online business said that there were a lot to learn to do online business.

"Fake credit does not guarantee good business. Buyers are smart and sophisticated," Lao said. She said she has now learned how to take good photos of products, how to describe them well and how to promote them.

After the campaign

Du said that Taobao's campaign was important for the majority of vendors and kept online business fair.

After stopping the credit boosting business, Du has transformed his business into an online store trustee. "Many online shoppers have other full-time jobs, no experience

in online store management and marketing, or lack the knowledge of communicating with buyers," Du said.

He thinks that such vendors need professional help. His company aims to help such vendors and make profit by commission. So far, Du's company has 300 employees,

aiming at an annual revenue of 50 million yuan.

When Du was asked if he was concerned with any legal action that relevant parties might take against his actions, he said that so far, there was no law against what he did, but eventually there will be more legislation regulating online business.

Fencing's popularity rises slowly

By Venus Lee

Fencing, once regarded as an aristocrat's game, has emerged as a public hobby in China since the end of the 1990s. The popularity of the sport peaked during Beijing Olympic Games, but it still has a long way to go to find more fans.

First amateur fencing party

Last Sunday, more than 30 amateur fencers gathered at J Bar for the city's first amateur fencing-themed party.

Among them were office workers, college students and a few professionals. Although their skill levels were uneven, their enthusiasm still ran high. They quickly put on their white fencing equipment after arrival and were itching to compete with their swords.

"Fencers are constrained to combat in accordance to specific gestures at specific times," Wang Yifu, the organizer of the party, who is also a big fan of fencing, said.

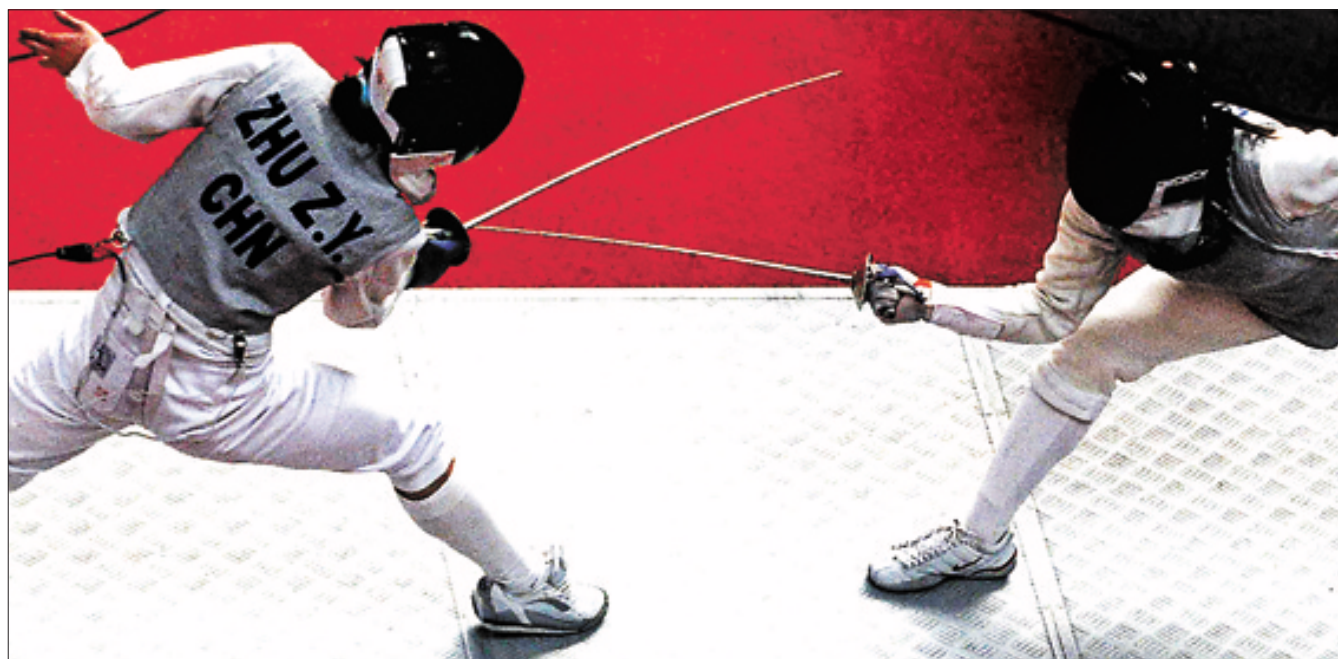
Due to the rain, the planned outdoor activity was moved to the second floor of the bar. Although the space indoors was a little bit narrow, the competitive atmosphere was still intense.

Zhang Tongming, 36, an IT worker obsessed with Zorro, took his wife and six-year-old son to the party. Although he lost at the matches, he still found pleasure in it. "I have been crazy about Zorro since I was a child. I feel that I can realize my dream of becoming like Zorro through fencing."

What's more, Zhang thinks that the sport is a good outlet for stress. "I am often depressed due to tension at work, so I need an outlet. But, if I choose sports like taekwondo or free combat, injury would be unavoidable. Fencing is very safe and acceptable for me and my family."

Cui Yajie, 21, the fencing team leader of China Women's University, came with her team for experience and to meet more friends who share the same interest. To her, fencing is not only a competitive sport, but also an excellent means of self-improvement. "Through training, I can not only shape my figure, be alert and flexible, but also cultivate my temperament by developing courage, confidence, and toughness. Combat is not only a competition of power and will, but also of wisdom," she said.

According to Wang, the organizer, the party aims not only to provide a platform for fencers to exchange experience and learn from each other, but to appeal to more people to pay attention to the sport. "Although the party is open and free, there were still not as many participants as we expected," he said.



A sport largely neglected

Fencing is still facing a problem because of a lack of public attention.

Yin Xu, 24, a graduate from the fencing department of Beijing Sport University, had a profound experience from the sport. "I spent several months finding a fencing-related job, but there were few recruitments for graduates of my major. Demand is regrettably low," she said.

"I finally became one of the village officials in a suburb of the city, and most of my classmates also failed to secure employment that suited our qualifications after graduation," she said. Out of the 12 students in her class, only two entered into the national team to further training. The rest returned to their hometown to find any job at all.

Zhang Xiang, 26, a student majoring in fencing at the Physical Education College of Shanxi University, also experienced difficulty with his career. He was recommended by his teacher to the Sport Department of Beijing's University of Aeronautics and Astronautics two years ago. But at that time, the university had no fencing class. The school leaders refused to open fencing training because they were unfamiliar with the sport and thought the sport was very dangerous.

"But since the students that were



A love of fencing has to start early.

CFP Photos

majoring in French insisted on the opening of the class, I could be a fencing coach at the university. I should thank my students, since they strongly asked school leaders to open the class for a better experience of French culture through fencing," he said.

According to Zhang, besides Beijing Sport University which has a professional fencing team, only Peking University, Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and China Women's University has a fencing training class. "Most coaches are amateur players in these universities because most universities take no account of the

development and popularity of the sport," he said.

Besides being unpopular at colleges and universities, the sport also enjoys few fans in society. Zhang still remembers that there was a small audience when he attended the National Fencing Championship Competition Finals in Liaoning province last year. "The audience's enthusiasm for the sport is not high. It made me feel like the players were completely alone when I looked around the stands," he laughed.

The public's indifference to the sport is attributed to their misunderstanding of it, said Ji Daoming, the secretary-general of the Chinese

Fencing Association.

"Many people still think of fencing as an aristocrat's game. They think the sport is unattainable and too expensive to enjoy. This notion keeps the public from becoming familiar with the sport," he said. Actually, the cost of the sport is not as high as some people might think, and it is even less expensive than badminton or tennis, which cost about 2,000 yuan to play. "In China, the cost of fencing equipment is very reasonable. For example, the fencing attire is about 1,000 yuan, and the sword is about 200 yuan. To most people, this is affordable. I think compared to badminton or tennis, fencing has great potential to be popular," he said.

Most parents won't think of the sport as their children's first option to learn, because they think the sport is dangerous and the rules too complex to remember. "In fact, the sport is very safe with the protective equipment including mask, gloves, and metal chest-protector. The rules are not as difficult as imagined, either. The beginner can master the basic skills through a half hour's training," he said. "Of course, if you want to be a professional player, it will take you at least two to three years' effort."

Fans needed

The public's passion for the sport met a small high during the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games when Zhong Man, the first world champion in men's fencing in China's Olympic history, won the golden medal.

Zhong's success is regarded as a milestone in the development of Chinese fencing, embodying the painstaking efforts of several generations of Chinese fencing coaches and players. Zhong him-

self exerted great influence on the promotion of the sport.

"Many people who love Zhong Man began to flood into fencing clubs to learn the sport after the Olympic Games," said Zhao Dan, the owner of Dans-fencing Club. "Many people are doubtful about the security when they come to consult us about the sport, but they find pleasure in it after they experience several classes."

Zhao said that, before the suc-

cess at the 2008 Olympic games, there were only about 20 members in her club, but after the games, the sport attracted about 30 new members each month.

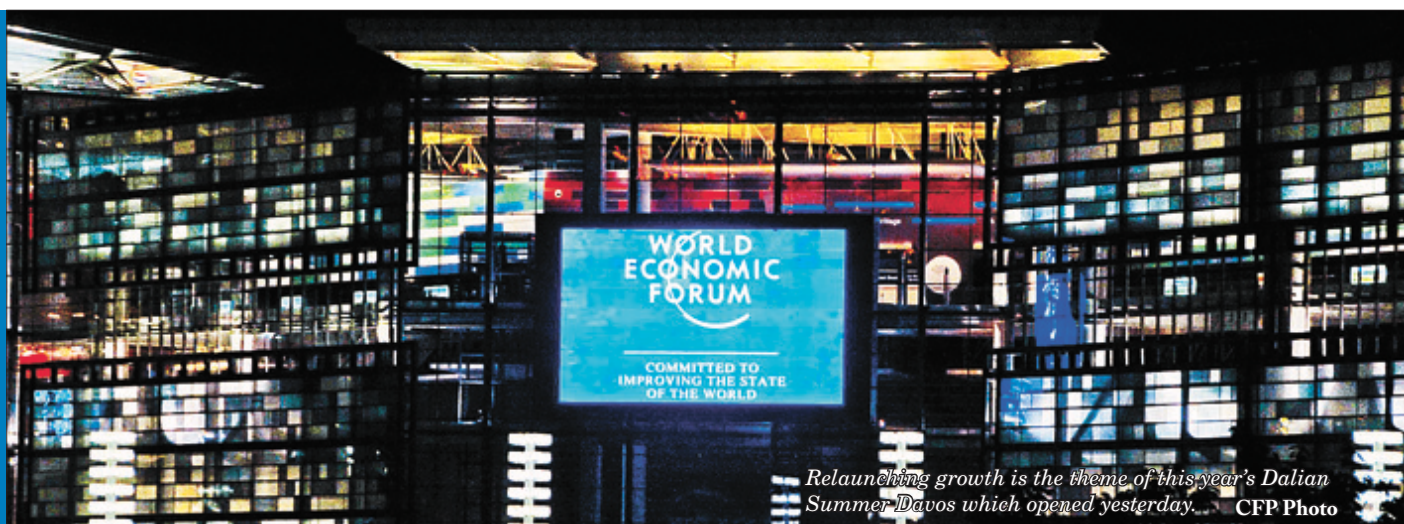
She said, Beijing has more than six fencing clubs now, and most trainees are white-collar workers. But, the number of trainees is still low. There are only dozens of trainees in most fencing clubs, except for Beijing Vango International Fencing Sports

Center, the biggest fencing club in the city, which is more popular with teenagers.

"Although the Beijing Olympic Games and Zhong Man's perfect performance greatly improved the popularity of the sport, it still needs long-term support and promotion from all directions, such as the media and schools. The development of fencing will only progress once we have more fencers," she said.

'Summer Davos' ponders ways to jump-start global growth

World business leaders and policy makers are gathered in the port city of Dalian from Thursday to Saturday to discuss ways to restore global economic growth.



Relaunching growth is the theme of this year's Dalian Summer Davos which opened yesterday. CFP Photo

About 1,400 participants from 86 countries and regions are taking part in the Annual Meeting of the New Champions, also known as "Summer Davos." Premier Wen Jiabao delivered the keynote speech at the opening ceremony yesterday.

This is the second time

Dalian, in Liaoning Province, is hosting the summit, which this year is themed "Relaunching growth."

Discussions at the summit will focus on five aspects: opportunities in a green economy, driving economic growth through science and technol-

ogy, addressing societal needs through innovation, new business models in a developing world and rethinking Asia's development model.

At the meeting, China will also discuss how it has coped with the global economic crisis and how it has achieved steady

economic growth, as well as its plans for collaborative international development projects.

Steps to achieve economic recovery were also discussed at last week's meeting of finance ministers and central bank governors of the Group of 20 (G-20) in London.

A statement issued at the end of the meeting said the member states, which include China, would "continue to implement necessary financial support measures and expansionary monetary and fiscal policies, consistent with price stability and long-term fiscal sustainability until recovery is secured."

European experts say

Chinese economic model works well

Two European experts say China's economic model has worked well and has contributed to phenomenal growth and improvements in the social sector.

Stanley Crossick, a senior researcher at the Brussels Institute of Contemporary China Studies, said the country's economic model has contributed to fundamental social improvements, such as raising 300 million people out of poverty.

The Chinese economy has

shown sustainable development amid the ongoing economic crisis, and has increased its influence in the world, helping to create a win-win relationship between China and developed countries, he said.

"However, the rising trade deficit and unemployment in developed countries will lead to greater protests and protectionism which would damage China," Crossick said.

He urged China to provide greater markets for devel-

oped countries, particularly in the services sector.

Paul Lim, senior academic adviser at the European Institute for Asian Studies, agreed that the country's economic model has worked well so far.

"Chinese economic recovery will give at least a psychological boost to the world economies," he said.

Lim also said the country should develop its domestic market rather than largely depending on exports.

(Agencies)

Third eye

What is Summer Davos all about?

Been breaking myself in gently with a stroll around the seafront where preparations are underway for a huge dinner on last Friday night, which means that almost everywhere you might want to go is cordoned off with police tape. Swat vans in evidence, too, though not really that necessary.

As a city, Dalian is everything that Westerners expect from the "new China" – historically a port but now a fast-emerging center of high-tech industries and, of course, the obligatory real estate boom.

On the beach there's a fair-ground and a cordoned off swimming area full of locals bobbing around in their rubber rings having a nice time, which made me feel slightly more grounded. I packed swimwear, so I might be persuaded to take a dip tomorrow, though don't imagine I'll be joined by too

many of the delegates.

Premier Wen Jiabao was in town and delivered his keynote opening speech, and perhaps he'll be persuaded to don the Bermudas and lead the way, with Martin Sorrell, chief executive of advertising giant WPP Group, and Klaus Schwab, founder and chairman of the World Economic forum, trolling along behind.

But to the business – what's the "Summer Davos" all about? I think the big themes here will be the following:

1. **Green stuff:** Copenhagen is on the horizon of course and – as UK Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Ed Miliband and others warned – negotiations do not seem to be going too well at the moment. But from a business perspective, there is a real buzz about green tech, and the business opportunities that

could be created by the move to a low-carbon economy.

2. **Life after death:** global stimulus packages might have softened the blow, but world global finance nearly ground to a halt last year. Things may be picking up, but they won't ever be the same again. As I heard repeatedly at a banking conference in Beijing this spring, "the American consumer is dead." So if Asia can no longer depend on the old export-led growth model, what next?

3. **Techie stuff:** perhaps one broader lesson from the financial crisis is that a lot of the growth that was based on financial innovation has turned out to be a chimera. This is why there is now a sense that business and governments are refocusing on technology.

– Peter Foster, China correspondent of The Daily Telegraph



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Will innovation work?

Li Kaifu leaves Google for start-up



Li Kaifu, former President of Google China, speaks during the launching ceremony of his own company, Innovation Works.

IC Photo

By Huang Daohen

Questions surrounding the departure of Google China's president Li Kaifu have now been answered. Li said at a press conference Monday that he is not leaving due to any perceived failure, but instead, he plans to set up a new venture capital firm: Innovation Works.

But Li's choice prompts a question: is there innovation? Compared to places like Silicon Valley, entrepreneurs and professional staff here lack the openness and idea-sharing that drive their Western counterparts.

Li leaves Google China

On September 4, Li Kaifu, head of Google China, officially announced his departure from the search company. Li's move means he would abandon the world's biggest Internet firm as well as options and stocks worth 96.6 million yuan, but the compensation is a job where he can work for himself and control it all.

"I have no regrets now, but there are dreams I still want to achieve," Li said on his blog.

The dream later turned out to be starting his own business. On Monday, Li told a press conference in Beijing he would start a new company to help young people.

"I am afraid I won't have enough time if I don't do it now," he said.

In the forthcoming book *The World Will Become Different Because of You*, Li talks about his resignation.

On August 5, Li flew to the US. In his meeting with Alan Eustace, Google's senior vice president of engineering, Li announced his decision to leave. On the morning of August 6, Google CEO Eric Schmidt sent Li an email, asking

him to reconsider.

"Money is not so important," Li says in his book. During his turn as president of Google China, Li preferred to be called Teacher Li rather than Boss Li, and enjoyed helping young people, answering their questions and helping them to find their own way.

Rumors of Li's resignation have circulated for years, but the official announcement made last week still came as a shock to Google employees.

"Li Kaifu has done so much and tried so hard over the past few years. He had to keep shuttling between US headquarters and the Chinese government in communication and coordination. It was like dancing on a knife's edge," Liu Rui, a Google China's employee, said.

A recent article on Li's blog states his own reason for his departure: "It is very simple: my new job is really exciting!"

In the weeks since Li tendered his resignation, he has been working on his new business.

Since entering the Chinese market in 2005, Google has seen three leaders resign: Google Asia

Pacific Marketing Director Wang Huainan, Google vice president and Greater China president Johnny Chou and Li Kaifu.

Li served the longest, during which Google's development in China has been uneven. It took Google more than two years to get legal status in China. A tax evasion case and pornographic access scandal in July didn't do it any good. And Google faces strong competition from the domestic search engine Baidu.

However, Google's market share in China has climbed to 31 percent from 16.1 percent in 2006.

New venture capital firm

"In my career, I've never run away from anything - I run toward things," Li told Monday's press conference as he announced his project.

Li said the new company, Innovation Works, will have a brand new model but will be similar to a venture capital (VC) company. "It is a comprehensive business platform and aims to help young people start businesses," he said.

Under Li's leadership, the platform will provide finan-

cial and technical support to entrepreneurs and technology start-ups focusing on the Internet industry.

"We're going to collect the best ideas, and we're going to hire the best engineers and entrepreneurs. After one year, we'll send the companies into the open," he said.

According to the company's website, Li will invest 800 million yuan in the coming five years in three areas - the Internet, mobile Internet and the information technology (IT) industry.

The new offices will be located at Tsinghua Science Park in Beijing's Haidian District, the same park in which Google China is situated.

On-line testing for the Innovation Works' website has already begun despite its incomplete content, and recruitment is underway.

Li said though it was difficult to raise funds, he has managed. As of now, backers include the founder of video-sharing website YouTube, Legend Holdings president Liu Chuanzhi as well as several leading US-based venture capital companies.

Analyst

Will Li's move work in China?

China's economy has made tremendous progress over the past decade. The government's market reforms have brought the world's most populous nation closer to developed status.

But there are some areas of the economy that lag behind Western Europe and the US. The slow development of the IT industry is perhaps best evidenced by the struggles that Google has experienced.

About three years after

entering China, the Internet giant still finds itself in an uncomfortable working relationship with its Chinese counterparts. Many complain China lacks the openness and idea-sharing which is common among entrepreneurs in places like Silicon Valley.

Will Li's Innovation Works work in an environment where technology is relatively isolated?

The answer is pending. China has the potential to develop into a more innova-

tive and advanced technological society.

On the other hand, the government needs to play a vital role.

First, the government should be neutral on technology standards, which will give all competitors an equal opportunity in the marketplace.

Second, the government should strive to make an industry-led, market-driven standardization system leading to increased innovation, compe-

tion and economic growth.

Thirdly, more effort is required to fully protect intellectual property so innovators can reap the fruits of their labor.

And finally, the participation of innovative foreign companies in China's economy is good for China, because strong competition builds strong products and strong brands.

- Daniel Hill, undersecretary for business and industry at the American Chamber of Commerce, Shanghai

Apple aims to take a bite out of Windows 7

By Huang Daohen

Snow Leopard, Apple's latest operating system update, was released ahead of schedule last week. And while Apple says the news system is "refined, not reinvented," it will become the main competitor to Microsoft Windows 7 to be released in October.

Apple said during last week's press conference that its retail stores, authorized resellers and online store are now accepting orders.

"Snow Leopard builds on our most successful operating system ever and we're happy to get it to users earlier than expected," Bertrand Serlet, Apple's senior vice president of Software Engineering, said.

Snow Leopard will be available as an upgrade to the current Leopard system for \$29, he said.

For Snow Leopard, Apple engineers refined 90 percent of the 1,000 programs that make up its operating system, the company said in a news release.

Among the most anticipated features will be what Apple promises to be faster applications, including the email and Web browser Safari 4, while freeing up 7 GB of drive space, compared with the current system.

"It's interesting that Apple is offering its new operating system as a \$29 upgrade. It's so cheap and one probably spends more than that on coffee each week," Wen Yijun, an analyst, said.

Wen suggested that with Snow Leopard's relatively low price, Apple is trying to undermine Windows 7.

Microsoft is set to release Windows 7, a new version of its PC operating system, on October 22.

Wen said Windows 7 is simply a service pack for the unpopular Windows Vista.

Microsoft said the lowest-cost upgrade from Vista is \$120 and the lowest-cost single license is \$199.

"I think Apple is using a minor upgrade to its operating system as an opportunity to sell it at a lower price and market the new OS," Wen said. "In other words, Apple is promoting the Mac platform as a superior alternative to Windows."

"The release of Snow Leopard is not about new features; rather, it is about keeping Mac users up to date with the latest technology versus Windows XP and Vista users on antiquated technology."



Apple releases its new OS.

Photo provided by Apple China

Shanghai 'chocolate girl'

Another stunt from TV contests?

By Zhang Dongya

A half-black Chinese woman who participated in a Shanghai TV contest has sparked heated discussions about the country's TV talent contest phenomenon.

Lou Jing, 20, made it to the Top 30 on Dragon TV's *Go, Go! Oriental Angel!* talent contest, but her quest for stardom ended in the Top 12.

From the show's first week, Lou drew the most attention because of her dark skin. She became gossip material when her Shanghaiese mother shared their family's story during one episode of the show.

Some observers say the mother's interview was a publicity stunt, but the show's director has denied the allegations.

Lou grew up in a single-parent household. Her father, a black American, did not know his Chinese fiancée was pregnant when he decided to return to the US for good.

Her parents were thus separated and she was left with her mother. "At that time, my mother came over to help us. I often had to go out of town to work, like



Dark-skinned Shanghaiese woman Lou Jing appearing with her mother (center) on the *Go, Go! Oriental Angel!* talent show.

Jiangsu, and Lou Jing would stay at home by herself," Lou's mother said in the interview aired on *Go, Go!*. Reports have not identified her by name.

Lou began asking about her father when she was seven, but her mother refused to give her any information. It was not until she

was 16 that she learned his identity and her parents' tragic love story.

Some audience members sympathized with the woman; some criticized the mother's behavior. On August 30, the day Lou was dropped from the competition, an online post under her name appeared on KDS, the most pop-

ular online community among Shanghai people.

"I'm Lou Jing of Dragon TV, and here I'm making a statement. My father is American, not African. I'm a born and bred Shanghaiese. I should not have to bear my parents' mistakes, I'm innocent!" the message said.

The post became a hot topic among netizens, but it was later confirmed to have been written by an impostor. "I was busy with the competition that day. I didn't have time to eat, let alone write a statement on the Internet," Lou said on her blog.

She said that last week, she continuously received strange phone calls from the media and some strangers. Harsh comments on the Internet have also upset her family.

When Lou appeared on *Go, Go!* for the last time

on September 4, she appealed to the public for respect and privacy: "I'm just an ordinary Shanghai girl. My life with my mother has been badly damaged, so please stop nosing around about us."

Some audience members said the mother's appearance on the show was a stunt by Dragon TV to increase its ratings and viewership. But its director Lu Yong said the show's producers had no hand in what she chose to reveal.

"The show's a live broadcast, we have no idea what the parents are going to say," he said in an interview with Xi'an-based *Chinese Business View*. "We focus on the contestants, not their family's stories," he said.

Comment

TV station confused between right and wrong

Lou Jing is innocent since it was not her choice to be born. But her mother's behavior is beyond what Chinese people deem acceptable. What's weird is that such an embarrassing story was made public by the TV station. No doubt, their (mother and daughter's) life will be badly affected. The audience rating might go up because of the girl, but isn't it the TV station that is confused between right and wrong?

— Qin Quanyao, critic, cjn.cn

Competitions should focus on music

I've followed American Idol since 2005, and also watch domestic shows. I have to say there is also media hype in American Idol, but domestic TV stations are much worse.

The unfair thing about American Idol is that the judges decide the first round of competition, not the American public and it's not broadcast lives, unlike those in China. It edits the videos of participants — some have long, flattering clips, while others appear plain. So the judges and the program producers lead the audience down the road toward a decision.

It also focuses on some participants' family background or unsavory past to grab the audience's attention. One contestant in its season eight named Danny Gokey became popular, partly because his young wife died a month before his audition. Though both his musical talent and his moving life story won over the public, you realize later the show went overboard.

I think TV contests should focus on a person's musical talent, not peripheral matters.

— Chuck Li, TV viewer

Need to be open and embraced

This is the phenomenon known as cultural diversity. The sooner the Chinese people accept and embrace each other's differences, the more they become a civilized society.

All the spiteful comments (about Lou Jing) are proof that some people have yet to outgrow their ignorance and xenophobia. People who are guilty should acknowledge their narrow-mindedness and bow their heads in disgrace knowing they represent the anchor holding back the progression of their culture.

— Jay, netizen on chinahush.com

Background

Show in China

The country's TV talent contest phenomenon began in 2004 with Hunan TV's *Super Girl*, dubbed "the Chinese American Idol".

The following year, *Super Girl* bagged for Hunan TV the second highest domestic TV ratings at the time, according to media research company CSM. The No. 1 spot belonged to CCTV.

Super Girl's wild success spawned a dozen similar shows, including productions by provincial TV stations and CCTV. These programs fiercely battled for viewership.

To win the ratings war, some provincial shows resorted to stunts, which infuriated audiences. In 2007, the

State Administration of Radio Film and Television (SARFT) banned a Chongqing TV reality show, citing "malicious media hype."

The SARFT soon issued regulations that sought to reign in the shows. It said that from October 1, 2007, all the reality contests produced by provincial TV stations cannot be broadcast from 7:30 to 10:30 pm, the evening prime-time slot, when the majority of viewers tune in.

In 2005, Hunan TV made headlines with its controversial choice of the androgynous Li Yuchun as *Super Girl* champion.

This year, the station launched a new singing con-

test, *Happy Girl*, which again became the talk of the country. It included in the Top 10 Zeng Yike, a 19-year-old whom critics say cannot carry a tune to save her life. Though Zeng did not win the competition, the controversy was enough to put Hunan TV under the spotlight again.

According to People.com.cn, which in August surveyed contest participants, more than 60 percent of the respondents said they were tired of "idol competitions." The study also found that more than 50 percent of netizens it interviewed thought the competitions this year were the worst, the top reason being "malicious media hype."



Lou Jing CFP Photos

Easing hospital pain through a paintbrush

By He Jianwei

After two months of hard work, six artists from Paint a Smile Foundation have managed to transform the bare white walls of Beijing Children's Hospital into a landscape of fantasy and dreams.

Last Wednesday, the organization's founder Laura Cotton visited the hospital and offered encouragement to its young cancer and heart disease patient.

She is no stranger to pain and suffering.

In 1985, she and her sister met a serious car accident. "My sister Eve did not survive," she said, adding that she was haunted by horrible memories and grief for years after.

It took more than a decade for her to understand why she was given another chance at life: she would make it her mission to turn hospitals into a more cheerful place for children.

"To honor her (Eve's) memory, I founded Paint a Smile," Cotton said. "I love art and children, so I involved both elements in my projects."

Cotton founded the Geneva-based charity organization in 2000, which seeks "to reduce patient anxiety and make hospitals more cheerful and friendly by permanently turning cold and



Paint a Smile's volunteer painters at the Beijing Children's Hospital. Photo provided by Fleishman China

impersonal environments into colorful and welcoming worlds," Paint a Smile says on its website.

"Nobody should be left with the memory of a hospitalization

surrounded by bare white walls," Cotton said. In addition, research and experience have revealed that a friendly and comforting environment encourages

children's recovery.

Her first decorating work was in 1997, when she painted the walls of the Borovlani Hospital for Chernobyl Children in Minsk, Belarus.

She asked physicians and psychologists for advice on what to paint to reduce the child patients' stress and post-hospitalization trauma.

More projects and donations followed. But always, Paint a Smile's artistic themes were created in collaboration with hospital staff, and adapted to the needs of child patients.

"The scenes and environments we create in hospitals are a therapeutic tool. The images help children escape in their minds from places generally associated with physical and mental pain," Cotton said.

Later, Cotton created a pool of volunteer artists; it currently has 15. The painters undergo training in psychology before they are sent off to hospital in teams.

"The more children suffer, the more I want to help them," Cotton said.

When the children return home, they usually ask their parents to paint their room in vibrant colors, much as the hospital walls looked. "When parents say that, I consider that the biggest compliment to us," she said.

Paint a Smile has now decorated 147 children's wards throughout 57 hospitals in 14 countries. Beijing Children's Hospital was its first project in Asia.



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EU trade chief says confidence needed to revitalize economic ties with China

By Han Manman

EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton on Wednesday called for the EU and China to create a stronger economic partnership by boosting confidence in each other.

Ashton began a week-long trip in China Sunday, her first in the country since assuming office last October.

Her visit is considered a golden opportunity for the two trading powers to renew their economic ties as bilateral trade and investments have suffered in the ongoing global economic crisis. Trade relations have also

been hurt by the EU's frequent use of anti-dumping measures against Chinese products.

Recent figures released by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce showed that due to dwindling demand amid the crisis, trade and investment between China and the EU slumped in the first half of this year, with trade volume falling 20.9 percent year on year, and the value of the EU's investment in China declining 2 percent.

To stop a downward trend in bilateral investment and to fuel economic recovery, Ashton said the EU and China need to work

more closely to remove barriers and give their companies much needed confidence.

Since trade frictions are increasingly the result of non-tariff barriers, regulatory differences and intellectual property infringement rather than tariffs, building a strong relationship between trading partners is particularly important in keeping trade flowing, she said.

"Confidence is vital because I firmly believe that the future of international trade lies in relationships, rather than in the mathematical formula used to crunch

tariffs in the past," Ashton said.

"We also need to communicate, to speak frankly, to exchange ideas and to recognize there have been and will be some difficult moments as our relationship matures," she said.

Ashton said trade frictions should not hinder the China-EU relationship, and misunderstandings should be clarified.

"For instance, anti-dumping duties are sometimes seen as controversial, but they are an accepted part of advanced trade relations, used to combat unfair trade. Duties are applied based on strict rules

and clear evidence, and affect less than 1 percent of China's exports to the EU. China also imposes anti-dumping duties, including on the EU," she said.

The commissioner also appealed to China and the EU to work more closely on climate change issues as the two sides have both set ambitious climate change targets.

"We should maximize the potential for trade and investment in low carbon goods and services, which can boost our economies and contribute to lowering emissions," she said.

Animal welfare and protection gain traction in China

By Anton Za

Awareness of animal welfare and protection is growing at a phenomenal pace in China, said the head of an animal welfare group at a conference in Beijing last Friday.

A number of local and international animal protection groups, as well as academics, discussed crafting China's first animal protection act at the meeting on animal protection legislation.

"I'm very optimistic about the future," said Jill Robinson, founder and CEO of Hong Kong-based Animals Asia Foundation. "After nearly 25 years of working here, I have great hope and optimism that the

tide is turning at last."

Robinson, or "Ms. Luo," is a big name among China's animal welfare and protection activists.

A native of England, Robinson has loved and cared for animals since she was a girl. In 1987, she joined the International Fund for Animal Welfare and took part in many animal protection projects in Asia.

A decade later, in 1998, she founded Animals Asia after learning of the plight of the Asiatic Black Bear, also known as the "moon bear" for the yellowish, crescent-shaped marking on its chest.

Moon Bears are farmed throughout Asia for their bile, a key ingredi-

ent in traditional Chinese medicine. The methods used in bear bile farming involve keeping the animals in tiny cages for up to 25 years, with metal catheters inserted into their abdomens to extract bile, or keeping an open wound in their bodies through which the bile drips.

In 2000, Animals Asia signed a landmark agreement with the China Wildlife Conservation Association and the Sichuan Forestry Department to rescue 500 caged moon bears in Sichuan Province.

The agreement included working together to end bear-farming in China and to promote herbal alternatives to bear bile. It was the

first accord between the Chinese government and a non-Chinese-run animal welfare organization.

Since then, at least 40 bear farms have been closed down by the government, and 260 bears have been transferred to Animals Asia's Moon Bear Rescue Center in Sichuan.

The organization is now asking the Chinese authorities to look into the possible harmful side-effects of contaminated bear bile in a variety of Chinese medicines. These drugs are often manufactured in unhygienic, backyard laboratories, Robinson said.

Animals Asia is also working to stop the human consumption of dogs and cats.



Jill Robinson Photo by Anton Za

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Acupuncture Records celebrates 2nd birthday with great beats



Fans of Acupuncture's music at Lan Club

Photo provided by Acupuncture

By Wang Yu

The rain would not let up on Saturday night. Most Beijingers stayed home because they were not prepared for the sudden drop in temperature. Some of the ladies who were out put on their coats for the first time this season.

But inside Lan Club, the atmosphere was totally different. Acupuncture Records, one of the leading native electronic music labels, was celebrating its 2nd anniversary.

Music lovers gathered in front of the DJ booth and swung to techno beats from 9 pm until the wee hours of the morning. At the entrance, pho-

tographers from fashion magazines and websites marked their territory, ready to snap photos of the beautiful and fashionable people, which are a staple at these events.

Few people knew that the party almost did not happen. It was scheduled to be held at CNEX Salon Café in Image Base Beijing, but a new government policy on outdoor live concerts changed plans at the last minute.

"When we got the announcement, it was so close to the event. At first, we thought about cancelling the party, but that was very frustrating," said Wang Miao, managing director of Acupuncture.

Organizers quickly found Lan, and the news spread to electronic music fans and party animals.

It became a free for all event; money was returned to those who had bought tickets to CNEX.

That night, Lan's two main rooms played different kinds of music. One was the "techno room" where top DJs such as Ou Yang, Terry Tu and Patrick Yu played heavy bass lines and powerful beats. In the dimly lit room, a long table was dressed as a makeshift bar, filled with cocktails and soft drinks.

The music enticed the audience to dance in rhythm with

the acid stage lights. Smoke curled from burning cigarettes, creating a scene out of an electronic fairyland.

In the room on the opposite side, the club's lounge bar, the theme was "the good old days." Here, 1980's pop songs blasted from the speakers. When Michael Jackson's "Thriller," "Billie Jean" and "Bad" came on, the crowd roared with excitement.

Some songs were unfamiliar to college students and yuppies, but the enthusiasm was infectious. Couples danced in front of the bar while the DJ swung to the beat, lost in the melody and his own memories.

Event

United PINK Campaign

This year, Beijing United Family Hospital is promoting breast cancer awareness and prevention. The campaign's three initiatives are "promote," "prevent" and "present." As part of the "promote" initiative, the hospital encourages the community to nominate impoverished women for a free mammogram. Candidates should meet the following criteria: at least 40 years old, lives in Beijing and has not received the breast screening this year.

Nomination forms are available on the United PINK Campaign website pink.ufh.com.cn.

Where: Beijing United Family Hospital, 2 Jiangtai Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until September 22

Tel: 5927 7000; 5927 7120

Coffee-tasting at Face Bar

Shangrila Farms Gourmet Coffees is holding a coffee-tasting event at Face Bar this Saturday. The company's coffee beans are grown on a pristine and protected mountain near Shangri-La County, Yunnan Province, at 600 to 1,200 feet above sea level.

The coffee beans are certified Green Food and the growers are applying for Organic Farm status. Shangrila Farms says it buys only the best beans of the season's harvest, and offers local farmers premium prices to ensure quality. The company says the purchase of its coffee products supports local culture, handicrafts and rural poverty alleviation in Shangri-La and its surrounding areas.

Where: 26 Dong Caoyuan (behind the Cervantes Institute), Gongti Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: September 12, 2-5 pm

Tel: 6551 6788

(By Wei Ying)

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Good-bye to long hospital queues

By Venus Lee

The days of queuing for hours just to see a doctor is over. People in Beijing can now book hospital appointments by phone.

The Beijing Municipal Health Bureau released a list of booking hotlines for tertiary hospitals last Tuesday. Hospitals that fall under this classification are considered by the Ministry of Health to have the best technology and most comprehensive medical services in the country.

Among Beijing's 49 tertiary hospitals, 46 have already informed the public how soon they can call to make a booking. The period varies depending on the hospital. The latest appointment can be made a day in advance, while Beijing Tiantan Hospital and Beijing Ditan Hospital have not announced

any restrictions.

Beijing Shijitan Hospital opened three hotlines, two of them exclusively for patients 70 years old and above. Peking University First Hospital also opened three lines, one of them specifically for pregnant women.

Beijing Hospital, Peking Union Medical College Hospital and the Cancer Hospital of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences have not yet launched their booking system.

To enjoy the service, people first need to obtain a medical visit card, or *jiuzhenka*, which is given free by hospitals. Patients need a separate card for each hospital.

Beijing Today tried out the new service with Beijing Friendship Hospital. It has an automated system, and before making a booking, patients are



Hospital phone operators busy during lunch hour Photo by Hao Yi

Some hotline numbers

Peking University First Hospital: 6655 1531; 6655 1539; 66111682 (maternity department)

Beijing Shijitan Hospital: 5184 7417; 6392 6757 and 63926600 (patients 70 years old and above)

Beijing Friendship Hospital: 6302 4858; 6304 6348; 63040910

China-Japan Friendship Hospital: 8420 5299; 8420 5288

asked for their personal information like their name, ID number and sex. The service is available in Chinese and English, but most hospitals' English service is not yet running.

The service seeks to reduce the stress of people having to queue overnight just to see a doctor. "Some hospitals encourage making a booking on their

website, but many old people don't know how to use a computer let alone make a booking online," said Fang Laiying, director of the Municipal Health Bureau.

Beijing is the first city to offer the service. Next month, other tertiary hospitals nationwide will follow suit, the Ministry of Health said. For more information, visit bjhb.gov.cn.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

I read your story about rent-free barter stalls at Panjiayuan Antique Market. How long will they be free, because I plan to participate this National Day holiday?

Panjiayuan's management has not yet decided when it will begin charging a fee to participants. But it announced that during the week-long October holiday, from October 1 to 8, it will be open from 6 am to 6 pm, same as this summer's schedule. On National Day, October 1, the market will be closed. It is open any other Thursday. Anyone interested can set up a spot there by paying 10 yuan everyday except Thursday.

I'm new in Beijing and am looking for a decent apartment that's not too pricey. I found one, but can't stand the wall's color. I'm thinking about repainting it once I get it. Do you think the landlord might not return my deposit if I do that?

When you repaint or refurbish an apartment, you first need to get your landlord's permission. And make sure it's included in your contract that he will return your deposit after you have made changes to the interior decoration.

I'm planning a trip to Mount Panshan in Tianjin during the October holiday. Can you suggest a bus route from downtown Beijing?

Since August, special public transports have been traveling from Beijing to Panshan every weekend.

You can catch the bus at the Military Museum at 7:30 am every Saturday and Sunday; it will depart Tianjin at 3 pm on both days. The trip takes 1 hour.

Panshan is 60 kilometers away from Beijing. If you want to drive down, take Jingping Expressway. It should not take you more than 50 minutes.

Military Museum

Where: 9 Fuxing Lu, Haidian District
Tel: 6686 6114

There's supposed to be a flower expo in Shunyi District this month. Do you know where I can get tickets?

The China Flower Expo will take place from September 26 to October 5. Tickets are available at any Bank of Beijing branch or China Youth Tourism office. Ticket to the main hall costs 60 yuan and is only good for one day. Call 8418 6969 or check out 7flowerexpo.com for more information.

(By Wei Ying)

Wine-tasting events not to miss in September

By Annie Wei

Longfeng Wines, a wine consulting company, handpicks some of the best wine-tasting events in Beijing this month.

Fun Yard Night

The event starts with a 30-minute introduction about wine. Then participants will try three types of wine. Snacks will be served. Come in business casual attire.

Where: Vineyard Wine Experience Shop, Room 1030, 3/F Tower 10, Jianwai SOHO, 39 East Third Ring Road, Chaoyang District

When: September 16 and 23, 7-9 pm

Tel: 5128 9169

Cost: 50-100 yuan

La Rioja Alta Tasting

La Rioja Alta is a famous wine-producing area in Spain, and the event will introduce wines from that area.

Where: Swiss Hotel, 66 Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: September 14, 4-7 pm

Tel: 6461 2072

Cost: Free

M. Chapoutier Wine and Dinner

The Chinese office of Torres distributor will host an M. Chapoutier wine dinner at Brasserie Flo Restaurant. The "Duo of Syrah" Rhone Valley wine dinner will be hosted by people from M. Chapoutier winery and there will be exquisite cuisine prepared by a Michelin star Chef.

Where: 16 Dongsanhuan Bei Road, Chaoyang District

When: September 24, 7 pm

Tel: 5165 5519

Cost: 358 yuan

Taste of the Nations 3rd Edition

This fall, Torres wine company has a special outdoor wine-tasting event at the Chilean Embassy. It will prepare 150 wines from 12 countries, and canapes will be served. There will also be a Chilean art exhibit and live performances.

Where: Chilean Embassy, 1 Dong Si Jie, Sanlitun, Chaoyang District

When: September 26, 2-5:30 pm

Tel: 5165 5519

Cost: 188 yuan



CFP Photo

By He Jianwei

With a round belly and heavy beard, Ai Weiwei is the most renowned conceptual artist in China. In 2006, he used 2,000 cloth components to make an imaginary world map for the 15th Biennale of Sydney.

In 2007, his *Fairytale* project won international attention in Germany when he took 1,001 Chinese people to the Documenta in Kassel, the hometown of the Brothers Grimm.

This year, he brought two pieces back to Beijing to exhibit to a Chinese audience. Many consider him a fairytale dreamer, while he says he would prefer the epitaph of "Here Lies a Typical Schizoid."

Influenced from early on by Dada, Duchamp, Jasper Johns and Andy Warhol, Ai Weiwei's works take a conceptual approach in installation and sculpture.

He is an internationally acclaimed artist, but Chinese audiences know him best as the designer of the Bird's Nest, the Olympic Stadium built in Beijing in collaboration with Herzog & de Meuron.

Last Saturday, Ai displayed two of his best-known works at the Faurischou Beijing. It did not take long for people to swarm around him seeking a photo op.

The current socio-political and economic climate is a starting point for much of Ai's art, and he uses local materials and resources like reclaimed wood from traditional homes and temples, Neolithic vases, Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) furniture, porcelain from the imperial kilns in Jingdezhen, freshwater pearls, bricks, tea, marble, stone and bamboo.

Visitors to the gallery are greeted with a view of the 3D *World Map* that is 1 meter tall and made of cotton purchased from a Hebei Province marketplace and meticulously shaped and installed.

China is the world's largest producer of cotton, as well as its largest importer and consumer. As the world's top producer of textiles, the piece is obviously a commentary on China's prominence in global trade.

But Ai selected only beautiful, soft white cotton, giving the work a more poetic and subtle appearance.

A greater challenge is how to join the components around a concept of national unity. "The major problem was to resolve how to hold together a hundred pieces tightly and precisely. The map is just a shape," he says.

Behind the *World Map* is another piece more in the vein of Joseph Beuys: Ai's *Fairytale* could be termed a "social sculpture." He conceived of it as a piece for Documenta in 2007, in which he brought 1,001 people to the relatively small town of Kassel, including farmers, laid-off workers, street vendors, those from ethnic minorities, teachers, police officers, engineers, students, rock singers and office workers.

For many participants, the trip to Kassel was their first time abroad. The artist provided them with luggage, various accessories and created a temporary living environment that included dormitory-style sleeping quarters.

They were encouraged to visit Kassel's sights, interact with local people and see other exhibits during the art show.

The only conditions were that they were

not allowed to leave the city and they had to document their impressions for the artist.

When he was invited by Documenta, Ai decided not to make a conventional work like a painting or sculpture, but he wanted to do a work which directly related to the lives of ordinary people.

"The concept behind the piece [*Fairytale*] was to create conditions which encourage individual experience and extend people's participation in art," he says.

Born in 1957, Ai has a famous father Ai Qing, who is regarded as one of the finest modern Chinese poets. Ai Weiwei spent five years in Shihezi, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region with his parents, when his father was sent to a camp there.

By age 10, the artist was used to rural life.

They did everything themselves, from building their home to farming to gathering clay to make bricks. Extending and repairing the family home was Ai's first brush with architecture. "It's about making efficient, cost-effective structures and not about creating something beautiful. It's about work with a purpose," he says.

In 1978, he enrolled in the Beijing Film Academy and attended school with Zhang Yimou and Chen Kaige. The same year, he was one of the founders of the early avant-garde art group the Stars, which disbanded in 1983.

When he stayed in New York from 1981 to 1993, he started working on performance art and creating conceptual works. He lived in East Village, on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Scores of artists and hippies lived in the area.

Although he studied at Parsons School of Design, he spent most of time working part-time and doing street photography. His album has a picture he took of Tan Dun, a current classical composer, playing violin on the street.

Ai returned to China in 1993 when his father fell ill. When Ai was born, his father was 47 years old. Ai described the relation between his father and him as "rain and river." "The most influential thing my father did for me was to teach me that fame and gain are infamous deeds," he says.

He says that as a child, he rarely realized his father was there: that perceived absence gave him endless freedom.

Ai seldom placed his work on exhibit in China. His last exhibition was at the Guangzhou Triennial in 2002.

In October, he will show his work at Haus der Kunst in Munich, Germany, which will be a larger solo exhibition than the one now in 798 Art District.



Ai Weiwei

CFP Photo

Fairytale

Ai Weiwei's conceptual

As the world's top producer of textiles, *World Map* is obviously a commentary on China's prominence in global trade.



Ai Weiwei used 2,000 pieces of cloth to make an imaginary world map for the 15th Biennale

e artist

al work comes to 798

Ai's *Fairytale* could be termed a "social sculpture." He conceived of it as a piece for Documenta in 2007, when he took 1,001 people to the relatively small town of Kassel.



Participants in *Fairytale* lived in a dormitory at the Documenta in 2007.

World Map

Ai Weiwei's Solo Exhibition

Where: Faurschou Beijing, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 20, except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Tel: 5978 9316



of Sydney in 2006.

Photos provided by Faurschou Beijing

Updike's poems reflect his last years

By Charles Zhu

John Updike, author of the many Rabbit and Bech novels, died this January after spending his twilight years since 2002 working on poetry about his end.

Endpoint And Other Poems (97pp, Alfred A. Knopf, \$25) shows his extraordinary talent and power with imagery and imagination as a poet and an accomplished and prolific novelist and essayist.

There are many rare pleasures in reading poems completed only weeks before his death. The poems, composed in quiet, casual, loosely rhymed sonnets, describe the first and the last years of the poet's life from Arizona to New England. They provide fleeting impressions of Russia, India, and the Irish seashore, and extol golf and golfers, love in old age and America. The poems, spanning Updike's 70th birthday in 2002 to his death, are very personal but not egoistic pictures or lonesome musings. They record the end of a successful, middle-class man.

In his verse, Updike boasts about his sexual prowess and laments his early wild lust. There are many details of his early life juxtaposed with all that same life's end.

The poet was infatuated with Doris Day, America's busiest actor, who Updike reports was at least endowed enough to rival Marilyn Monroe. The

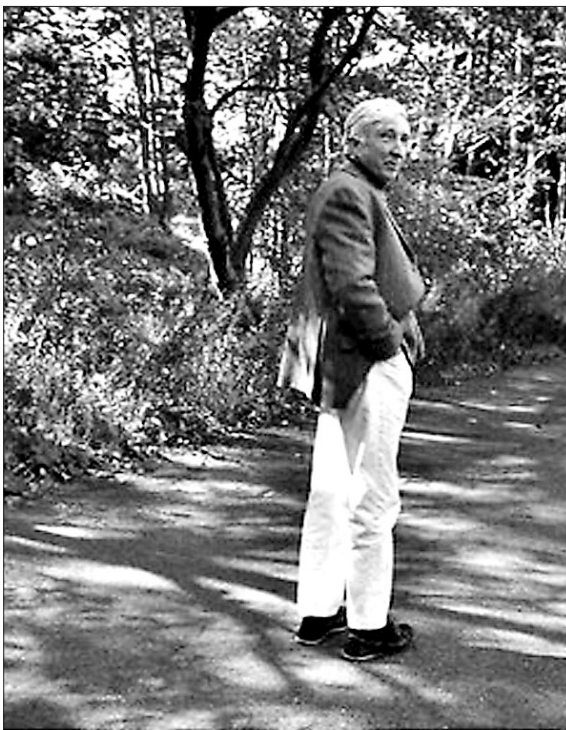
teenage Updike was mad about Day and remained so in his dying years.

He inherited the traditions of Walt Whitman in reporting about American life in a poetic way. No one in 20th century American literature, even John Dos Passos, wrote about life in the country so beautifully or so passionately. Updike was unusually well-groomed to compose the kinds of poems that give news its historic vantage.

He had never claimed himself to be a poet, giving his critics wide latitude to belittle his craft. But they should be careful. *Endpoint* shows what a terrific and accomplished poet he was. He showed exceptional talent in rhythm and observation, and in making pretty words click.

More than once, he stepped in the shoes of Robert Frost as in "Bird Caught in My Deer Netting": "How many starved hours of struggle resumed / in fits of life's irritation did it take / to seal and sew shut the berry-bright eyes / and untie the tiny wild knot of a heart? / I cannot know, discovering this wad / of junco-fluff, weightless and wordless / in its corner of netting deer cannot chew through / nor gravity-defying bird bones break."

Updike will be remembered together with Sir Walter Scott, Thomas Hardy, George Meredith and Herman Melville.



ENDPOINT
and other poems
*
John Updike

Stories of Chinese emigrants in Australia

By Zhao Hongyi

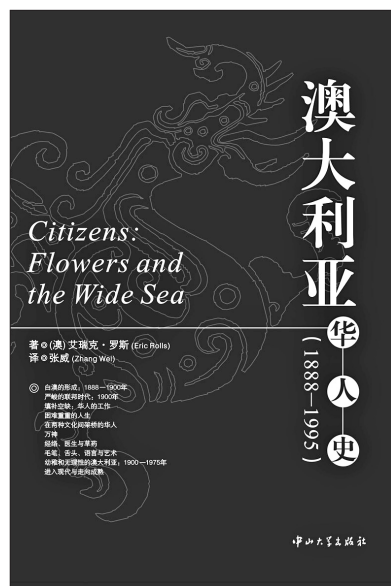
Continuing *Sojourners*, this epic of China's centuries-old relationship with Australia, which ends in the year 1888, the late author Eric Rolls wrote *Citizens: Flowers and the Wide Sea* (631 pp, University of Queensland Press, \$43.95) in 1996.

Last Friday, the Chinese version of *Citizens* (344 pp, Sun Yat-sen University, 57 yuan), translated by Zhang Wei, was released at the Australian Embassy.

The book tells the story of Chinese emigrants in Australia and their struggle with life in the new country after 1888.

As the minority whites dominated society, Chinese emigrants were never regarded as part of the colony and later new country. They were regarded as "inscrutable," and used to be called "John Chinamen" instead of their real names.

In the early years, emigrants made their living planting vegetables and operating restaurants and laundries. They were very successful in their businesses, and gradually came to prominence in furniture manufacturing, wool cutting and liquid rubber collecting. Today, the Chinese emigrants have had great success in almost every field and



sector in Australia.

Though many Chinese emigrants were successful in business, they never became part of mainstream Australian society. The status of Chinese Australians did not improve until the 1970s, when the country began to

focus on its diversity.

The author names a number of outstanding Chinese emigrants in Australia, including Mei Guangda, Liu Guangfu, Mai Xixiang and Zhang Renqian. Rolls says Chinese emigrants are as much a part of Australian history as the whites and natives.

Today, Chinese emigrants have become one of the most respected groups in Australia. Looking at the difficulties they have faced, it is hard not to be moved.

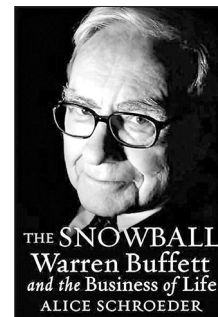
The book also gives us a picture of the evolution of Australia as a country and many other sides like its money, political development and the process of uniting its six provinces, which were independent colonies of Britain before independence in 1901.

Rolls is highly respected in Australia as a researcher and writer. His sensuous poetry and impeccably researched and incomparably seductive prose have won him a wide and appreciative audience over the last 30 years.

Many observers believe the embassy is working to improve bilateral relations with China since the relationship was frozen by economic scandals earlier this year.

CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

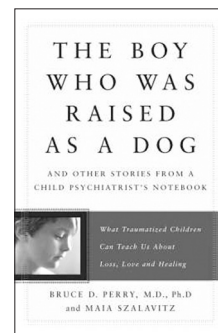
The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends these new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.



The Snowball: Warren Buffett and the Business of Life

By Alice Schroeder, 832pp, Bantam, 245 yuan

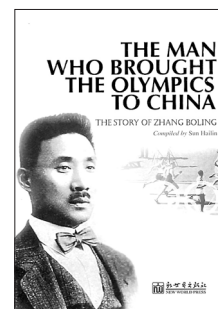
This book recounts the life and times of one of the most respected men in the world, Warren Buffett. The legendary Omaha investor has never written a memoir, but now he has allowed one writer, Alice Schroeder, unprecedented access to explore directly with him and with those closest to him his work, opinions, struggles, triumphs, follies and wisdom. The result is this personally revealing and complete biography of the man known everywhere as "The Oracle of Omaha."



The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog

By Bruce Perry and Maia Szalavitz, 288pp, Basic Books, 120 yuan

A world-renowned child psychiatrist takes us inside his pioneering work with trauma victims to offer a groundbreaking new perspective on how stress and violence affect children's brains – and how they can be helped to heal. Child psychiatrist Bruce Perry has treated children faced with unimaginable horror: genocide survivors, witnesses, children raised in closets and cages, and victims of family violence. Here he tells their stories of trauma and transformation.



The Man Who Brought the Olympics to China

By Sun Hailin, 237pp, New World Press, 30 yuan

Zhang Boling is a well-known Chinese educator, and the president and creator of Nankai Schools. Zhang was not only one of the first to dream of participating in the Olympics, but was also one of the few who struggled to send out the message to the Chinese about the Olympic spirit.

(By He Jianwei)

Zheng Hongsheng, the model designer has never enter an art school. Photo by Song Nannan



Back to the garage

A toy lover's original models

By Wang Yu

The toy model scene, long a haunt of comic and animation fans, has exploded the last few years as the Internet crushes international boundaries. Unlike in the 1990s, authentic products are easy to find in shops along Gulou East Avenue and the top floor of Soshow Mall. These high-end stores cater to Beijingers with a Peter Pan complex.

But creativity does not have to come with a steep price tag. Recently, many fans are discovering the fun of "garage kits" and are writing stories to promote their original creations. It is a real business extending far beyond simple assembly, because everything starts from scratch.

"If I used music to explain my hobby, it would be easier. As a fan of metal and goth, American-style models attract me more with their dark spirit," says Zheng Hongsheng, founder of Spider Toys, a garage kit brand.

The latest addition to Zheng's bedroom is a brand new Terminator T-600 model issued by a Hong Kong company after Terminator Salvation began airing. The sofa in the center of the room is surrounded by displays with his toys, which are mostly American comic heroes.

But one uncolored figure of a Hydralisk from the computer game *StarCraft* is an eye-grabber. Built of oil clay, the sculpture is the fifth from Zheng's private workshop. The head and body are almost finished, but the bug's complexity will require another month or two to fully capture.

"I usually work on my models on the weekend. The process is slow, so I can only finish one or two toys a year," Zheng says.

The 31-year-old model maker started to collect toys in 1995 when the market was smaller. But even then collectors had forked into two camps: the Japanese comic and animation characters took on an exquisite look familiar to most Chinese collectors while the American comics opened up a new world of fantasy.

"American toys usually do not require assembly and are priced cheaper, which makes it easier for people to jump in and start collecting," he says.

As a member of China's first generation of comic fans, he used to dream about becoming a comic artist and started to practice in 1992. Though he never made it into art school, that basic training paid off in other ways.

In 2003, he started to create his own designs at home. His first design was a chestbuster from the movie *Alien*. The next one was Pyramid Head, one of the most famous monsters from the video game *Silent Hill*. The model has five parts and Zheng took an 11-day leave of absence to complete it.

"Manufacturing toys is a job for a factory. When you do it on your own, it is a terrible experience," he says.

His bookshelf is crammed with design textbooks, but there is much to learn beyond the pages. Creating a reverse mold was the first big problem. After several failures, Zheng learned the techniques from a toy factory owner in Gongguan, Guangdong Province. The same factory would later make his toys.

"The Internet is a great reference where you can learn from model fans in Hong Kong and Taiwan, where the garage kit scene dates back earlier than

on the mainland. I met one factory owner through a QQ Group about models, and he has taught me a lot over the phone since then," Zheng says.

The number of comic and toy fans is booming in comparison to 10 years ago, but the garage kit scene is just beginning.

Though the participants are few, Zheng was not a pioneer. "Most of the designers on the mainland are silent and private, which has slowed the scene's progress," he says.

Zheng started the Spider Toys to share what he has learned and to help beginners. But unlike his peers, Zheng only pursues commercial creation. His blog has had 230,000 visitors.

Erila, the dark puppeteer, was the first model Zhang put into production. Only 50 were made. The purple haired, sexy female warrior is a mix of witch and machine. Though the figure was designed in typical American comic style, Erila has a Chinese face. The model costs 860 yuan in his Taobao store, and the high price scares away many buyers.

"The fewer you make, the more they cost. Fortunately, the factory was willing to accept my orders because the owner is interested in my private work," Zheng says. His *Alien* chestbuster will be going into production soon. Compared with the puppeteer, chestbuster is smaller and Zheng hopes its lower price will make it more attractive.

Character popularity is another problem. When *Transformers 2* hit cinemas, Zheng bought two toys, recolored the parts and they sold quickly online.

"I felt no happiness after earning the money. In a sense, it hurt me because I couldn't help question why I am making original designs. I've devoted myself to it,

"I felt no happiness after earning the money. In a sense, it hurt me because I couldn't help question why I am making original designs. I've devoted myself to it, but the reality is that people just want popular stuff."

Erila, the dark puppeteer was designed with a Chinese woman's face.

Photos provided by Zheng Hongsheng

From resin to retail

A "garage" or resin kit is an assembly scale model kit most commonly cast in polyurethane resin. These are often figures portraying humans or other living creatures. In Japan they are usually female animcharacters. The US favors movie monsters.

Garage kits were amateur-produced at first, and the term originated with dedicated hobbyists using their garages as workshops. Unable to find model kits of subjects they wanted on the market, they began producing kits on their own.

Such kits are usually produced in limited runs and are more expensive than injection-molded plastic kits.

Some figures are sold completed, but often they are sold in pieces for the buyer to assemble and finish.

but the reality is that people just want popular stuff," he says.

But that is the dilemma faced by all original artists. Native model makers are not short on ideas, just on financial backing. "At first, I thought that profits should be put aside when working to make a dream come true. But now, I've learned that I also need a plan," he says.

That is why he started work on the *StarCraft* Hydralisks, to be prepared for the upcoming release of its sequel. The

popularity of the original and the promotional campaign for the new game may help boost his sales. He is also publishing illustrations and background stories about Erila on his blog in hopes of making her an Internet phenomenon.

"Though it's difficult, I hope one day that making models can become my career. During the past five years, a lot of people have dropped out of the scene because they were worried about profits. But I haven't lost my passion," Zheng says.

Smart shopping in the south

Second-hand and vintage goods at Wanshanghui Mall

By Wang Yu

Since the Qing Dynasty (1616-1911), most merchants have lived on the east side of Beijing while the nobility have chosen the west side. It is no wonder then that today's great shopping areas – Gulou Dong Dajie, Dong Si and Dawang Lu – are located in the east.

But in the interest of new finds, *Beijing Today* headed south. Next to Subway Line 5's Ciqikou station is a new, three-story digital mall called Wanshanghui. It includes a great second-hand market for photography gear, audio equipment, vinyl records, clothes and household items.



Old CDs



All kinds of used things

Photographer's warehouse

Wanshanghui, which opened only two months ago, is quiet and uncrowded compared with Zhongguancun's popular Dinghao and Hailong malls. Although it still has some vacant stalls, it looks like Wanshanghui might soon give other digital shopping centers some competition.

Twiggy Song, a fashion magazine editor and a part-time photographer, was able to sell her Canon lens to one of Wanshanghui's shops, which she discovered online. "I never imagined there would be such a market outside (Beijing's) commercial areas," she says.

The building's first floor is packed with stalls selling new laptops, MP3 players, cell phones and computer accessories.

On the next floor is Huihuang, the second-hand camera shop that Song was looking for. The owner bought her lens for 1,600 yuan; it was 400 yuan less than her asking price, but all in all, she thought it was a fair deal.

The shop sells various used photography equipment, such as the Canon 40D and 5D camera bodies and the EF 17-40mm f/4L USM and 70-200mm f/2.8L lenses. It also cleans and repairs them.

Like most camera stores, Huihuang mainly sells Canon and Nikon products. Some of its stock is not on display, so do not hesitate

to tell the shopkeeper what you're hunting for.

Song exited the store with a slightly used Canon BG-E2 power grip for 780



yuan, almost 400 yuan cheaper than a new one.

Other photography accessories, such as camera bags and batteries, can also be found on the same floor. Across from Huihuang is a store that sells military-inspired clothes and outdoor equipment.

Paradise of second-hand goods

When Song stepped onto Wanshanghui's third floor, she discovered a paradise for bargain lovers. There are second-hand clothes and fashion accessories; but beside them are also harder-to-find used electronic equipment.

It has at least eight audio product stores that sell used amplifiers, speakers and Marantz and Yamaha CD players. There is also stage and concert equipment at bargain prices. Guitar players will be happy to know some of the stores offer effect pedals and cables.

Another surprise on Wanshanghui's top floor are the record stores. The shops have a longer album list; besides selling DVDs and CDs of popular music (10 yuan each), they also

have classical sounds on vinyl. An LP of Mozart's "Thus Do All Women" may set back shoppers 500 yuan, but it is a real find in this era of digital music.

Those who do not have a turntable can find the solution in shops just around the corner.

Some can also repair old machines to make them sing again.

In one store, *Beijing Today* found an Olympus gramophone sitting on a pile of speakers and keyboards. Its beautiful copper horn is reminiscent of a scene from a 1930s film.

We also discovered outmoded radios, such as a vintage Grundig (4,000 yuan), considered the best German radio brand.

In the middle of the third floor is a group of shops with no names and that sell an assortment of old goods – telephones, slide projectors, watches, even a wooden tennis racket made 20 years ago.

At Wanshanghui, shoppers will find a very relaxed atmosphere: storekeepers might be discussing last night's soccer match or playing computer games surrounded by old clothes, shoes and bags.



Speakers

Photos by Song Nannan



Music equipment



Classical sounds on vinyl



Used hats



Vintage glasses

Tips

Research

Second-hand products may be cheap, but they're not free. If you meet a seller online, spend at least a couple of weeks following the dealer's BBS or forum. This will give you a better idea if the person does honest business.

Most shop owners are knowledgeable about their goods, but it's better if you do your own research and try out the equipment before making a purchase.

Take a keyboard for example; you need to hear its sound to decide if it's right for you. Most manufacturers' websites will have sound clips of their products for review. Sites such as YouTube.com might also provide videos of the instrument in use.

Do not forget to look up reviews to find out from actual owners the model's high and low points. Once this is done, you can go to the market.

Price

Set your budget and try to stick to it. A camera that "was recently bought" and "barely used," for instance, should cost 25 to 35 percent less than its original price. If it's been with the previous owner for a longer time, then it should be discounted 50 to 70 percent.

Appearance

If a camera has a dent, chances are it has internal damage from having been dropped or banged up. We suggest taking a few photos to be sure it's still working properly.

The more scratches a camera has, the cheaper it should be. Finally, every button must be in good condition. Take pictures using the various shutter speeds and apertures.

Accessories

Before making a deal, check which accessories are included in the package. Most brand-new accessories for electronic equipment are outrageously expensive – sometimes accounting for half of the set's total cost.

In the second-hand world, they can be close to nothing. Most items are sold individually, because the more accessories a person buys, the more money the seller gets.

Coffee and tea at old Houhai

New

By Annie Wei

Foreigners who have lived in Beijing long enough find little excitement in visiting tourist Houhai's high-priced restaurants, bars and coffee shops.

But one cafe tries to recreate Houhai's atmosphere in 2003, one of its early years in the food and drinks scene: quiet, relaxed and affordable.

Café de Sofa, owned by a Chinese couple who adores Taiwanese cuisine, has a very simple decor. It has a gray facade accented by date wood, and mainly white walls.

"Our cafe is named Sofa, but that does not mean we have sofas everywhere. We wanted to extend the meaning of sofa to an ambiance that is warm and homey, where you can lie back and enjoy good food and drinks," one of the owners said.

All the shop's coffee drinks are made from Italian Lavazza coffee beans. Its best sellers include iced-dripped coffee (32 yuan), which is dripped through a special filter, then swirled in ice melted at 5 C. Because it takes 10 hours to prepare the coffee, it is on limited supply every day. It tastes rich and smooth, and is a must-try for coffee lovers.

If you miss the last cup of ice-dripped coffee, try the shop's iced coffee (22 yuan), made through a slow-filtering process, cooled, then served with ice. You can also order espresso (22 yuan) or hot American (22 yuan).



Café de Sofa is a cozy new spot at Houhai.

Photos by Wendy Zha

Café de Sofa's teas have also received good reviews. Their special concoction is cheese tea (20 yuan), made of sweetened green and black teas and Salish cheese. If you're looking for a new beverage experience, try this one.

The cafe also serves Taiwanese drinks such as iced pearl milk tea (16 yuan). Its menu

includes simple meals and wines, starting at 80 yuan a bottle.

Café de Sofa

Where: 12 Yindingqiao Hutong, Xicheng District

Open: 10 am – late

Tel: 6203 2905

Simple dinner,
45 yuan



Village-side healthy, zesty drinks

New

By Annie Wei

The opening of The Village in Sanlitun injected the area with a young, trendy and vibrant energy. The shopping mall includes a fountain where children love to run around, it regularly invites DJs to play in the square and it holds free art exhibitions to support the work of students.

Now, a new booth in the square offers visitors healthy and zesty drinks like fruit smoothies, fresh fruit juice, milk shakes and organic coffee.

Pure Smoothie's coffee is probably the cheapest people will find in the area – not to mention it is organic. The stall's espresso is 8 yuan; cafe Americano 10 yuan; latte 14 yuan; and cafe mocha 16 yuan.

Pure says its fruit juices are all-natural. The mango jumbo (24 to 32 yuan, depending on the size) is made from mango and banana fruits and Great Lakes orange juice.

Its milkshakes come in flavors like almond, cranberry, raspberry and elderflower tea (28 yuan medium; 32 yuan large).



Pure Smoothies' booth

Photo by Huang Xiao

People who do not like milk or are lactose-intolerant can order the soy smoothies. For an extra 3 yuan, customers can add walnuts or almonds to

their smoothies. For 5 yuan, you can have the macadamia nuts.

Pure can add "boosters" or health supplements in your juice or coffee for 3 to 5 yuan. There are supplements to boost energy, detoxify the body, relieve stress and combat exhaustion.

Pure Smoothies

Where: The Village's central square, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 11 pm

Tel: 8660 7588

Where: B119 Beijing China Central Mall, 82 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 5969 5963



Lamb noodle soup, 30 yuan

New

Great Shaanxi noodles in hiding

By Annie Wei

The old and grubby residential building opposite Tongli shopping mall retains Sanlitun's original face: markets, coffee shops and bars smack in the middle of Beijingers' homes.

The building's first floor is occupied by inexpensive restaurants, fruit stands, drink stalls, tailor shops and vendors offering DVDs. Stores on the floors above include a tattoo studio and a Shaanxi noodle restaurant known for its big servings.

Noodle Bar, located in what used to be living quarters on the second floor, looks more like a family kitchen than a restaurant. The apartment's living room has been turned into the dining area, with a table and four chairs beside a window. In the middle of the room are three more long tables and a dozen chairs.

To find the restaurant, you have to walk to the back of the building, then walk up the second floor of the last unit. The noodle bar is to your right.

Noodle Bar does not have much in terms of decor, but people clearly come here for the food.

Its most popular item is the lamb noo-

dles (30 yuan), a soup with vegetables like tofu, mushrooms, tomato and carrots thrown in.

Other must-tries are suancai yangroumian (lamb noodles with pickled cabbage that resembles sauerkraut, 35 yuan), lajiao jirou lamian (pepper chicken noodles, 38 yuan), and tudou niurou lamian (potato noodles with meat, 30 yuan). Non-meat eaters can go for the sucai lamian (vegetable noodles, 20 yuan).

The restaurant also recommends its xiao yintaorou (stewed pork, 48 yuan), a popular Shandong cuisine in which the pork bits look like dark cherries; xiangla xia (fried spicy shrimp, 48 yuan); and lianggua pijiuya (bitter melon fried with beer and duck, 48 yuan).

Noodle Bar's patrons say the owner used to sell Shaanxi noodles at a bar on Sanlitun Street, where some people would stop by until 2 or 3 am.

Noodle Bar

Where: Second floor of the last unit of a residential building opposite Tongli, Sanlitun Hou Jie, Chaoyang District

Open: 11-2 am next day

Tel: 6514 8098



Photos by Huang Xiao/CFP

Skid Row makes October holiday merrier



5 Friday, September 11

Exhibition
Diana World Tour
Where: Lomography Embassy, 9 Longtougjing Jie, Xicheng District
When: Until September 21, daily except Monday, 11 am – 8 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6657 2769



Photo-Respiration by Tokihiro Sato

Sato Tokihiro, a Japanese photographer, is renowned for his interpretations of light and space, and his fascination with dancing lights. Sato uses a large-format camera for exposures that last one to three hours: he moves the camera, creating points and beams of light by flashlight or light reflected from mirrors.

Where: Dandeli Art Space, Image Base Beijing, Building 1, 3 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until November 13, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6770 8966

Movie

Oasia
Where: Lele Bar (50 meters east of the Communication University of China's north gate), Dingfuzhuang, Chaoyang Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6576 5987

Nightlife

G-Eleven
Where: MAO Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 8:30 pm
Admission: 60 yuan
Tel: 6402 5080

Pacalolo

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 9:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6401 4611

By Wang Yu

After National Day, rock music fans will have something else to celebrate: On October 2, Skid Row will unleash its power in Beijing – a top heavy metal band in the 1990s and a big influence on China's earliest rockers.

"I can still remember the first time I played a foreign artist's concert video for my students. It was in 1994 and it was a tape of Skid Row's gig," said Zhang Fan, president of the Midi School of

Music, which is sponsoring the concert in celebration of its 10th anniversary.

"Midi School and most rock music fans my age grew up with the band. We decided to invite Skid Row to China to recall the early days of our rock life," he said.

Formed in 1986 in Toms River, New Jersey, the band reached its peak in the late 1980s and early 1990s when its first two albums went multi-platinum.

The five-member group's lead singer Sebastian Bach became a heavy metal idol for his powerful voice. Meanwhile, drummer Rob Affuso's performing style was copied by early Chinese rock bands such as Tang Dynasty and the Panther.

In 1996, the band fired Bach after an argument with its bass player and song writer Rachel Bolan. Its current lineup of musicians consists of Bolan, vocalist Johnny Solinger, drummer Dave Gara and guitarists Dave Sabo and Scotti Hill.

The departure of their front man resulted in a loss of fans, but the members say they do not regret the decision. "We've never thought of bringing him back,

because we decided to move on and make a new start. You cannot endure a bad relationship just to maintain a gold team," Hill said.

Bach made a solo appearance in Beijing, at the Chaoyang Pop Music Festival in 2006, which overwhelmed many local heavy metal fans.

The golden era of the genre may be over, but Skid Row is still hot in China. Its fans have been waiting to hear it live for more than 10 years. "People told me we have many fans here, which was astonishing news to me," lead singer Solinger said.

Skid row has sold over 20 million albums worldwide. Their hits "18 and Life," "Youth Gone Wild," and "I Remember You" are considered rock classics.

Skid Row Live in Beijing

Where: The Star Live, 79 Heping Xi Jie, Dongcheng District
When: October 2, 8 pm – midnight
Admission: 290 yuan; 390 yuan; 690 yuan
Tel: 6425 5677

6 Saturday, September 12

Exhibition

Broken Series

– Chen Wenbo

Solo Exhibition

Where:

Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 11, daily except Monday, 10 am – 7 pm

Admission: 15 yuan

Tel: 8459 9269

Index – Miao Xiaochun's

Photographs

Where:

White Space Beijing, 255 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District

When: Until November 7, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 8456 2054

Movie

Offside

Where:

Lady Book Salon, 69 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6270 1928

Nightlife

Wan Xiaoli China Tour

Where:

Weibozhiyan Club, Room 2308, 3/F North Building, SOHO

Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm
Admission: 50 yuan
Tel: 5900 0969



Nanwu's First EP

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6401 4611

7 Sunday, September 13

Exhibition

Immersion and

Distance –

Cheng Ran and

Jiang Pengyi

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 11, daily except Monday, 10 am – 7 pm

Admission: 15 yuan

Tel: 8459 9269

That's Not an Oasis – Zhang

Yingnan Solo Exhibition

Where: Summit Art Space, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until September

19, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9171

Movie

Give Me a Bed

Where: Space for Imagination, Building 5, Xiwan-gzhuang, Shuangqing Lu, Haidian District

When: 2 pm
Admission: 15 yuan
Tel: 6279 1280

Nightlife

The Redbucks

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 6401 4611



Champagne supernova

Where: MAO Livehouse, 111, Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 8:30 pm – midnight
Admission: 40 yuan
Tel: 6402 7494

Upcoming

Exhibition

Back to Basics – Traditional Ink Wash as a Contemporary Vision

Where: Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower, 9 Chongwenmen Dong Dajie, Chongwen District
When: September 19 – October 7, daily, 10 am – 5 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6525 1005

Stage in October

Concert

Rundfunk Blasorchester Leipzig

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 4 Zhonghua Lu, Dongcheng District

When: October 4, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-580 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

The Vienna Boys Choir Asia

Tour 2009

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 4 Zhonghua Lu, Dongcheng District

When: October 10-11, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-680 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

Strings and Keyboard Collective – Chamber Music II

Where: Beijing Concert Hall,

1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District

When: October 14, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-150 yuan
Tel: 5166 1145

Sounds of Finland – Midori Meets Sibelius

Where: Beijing Concert Hall,

1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District

When: October 16, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-150 yuan
Tel: 5166 1145

Sounds of Africa – Boys Choir of Kenya

Where: Poly Theater, 14

Dongzhimen Nan Dajie,

Dongcheng District

When: October 25, 7:30 pm

Admission: 50-150 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

Dance

San Francisco Ballet China

Tour 2009

Where: Poly Theater, 14

Dongzhimen Nan Dajie,

Dongcheng District

When: October 1-3, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-1,680 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

The Taming of the Shrew by the

Stuttgart Ballet

Where: Opera House of the

National Center for the Perform-

ing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie,

Xicheng District

When: October 9-11, 7:30 pm

Admission: 120-800 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Opera

Dragon and Phoenix – Peking

Opera

Where: Chang'an Theater, 7

Jianguomen Nei Dajie,

Dongcheng District

When: October 16, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-980 yuan

Tel: 6510 1155

Xishi

Where: Opera House of the

National Center for the Perform-

ing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie,

Xicheng District

When: October 28 – Novem-

ber 5, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-880 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By Jackie Zhang)

Keep your breath smelling fresh and natural

By Venus Lee

Rejected last time when you leaned over to give your sweetie a kiss? Relax, you are not alone. Lots of people suffer from dragon breath.

Now there is something to save you. According to a new research, components in coffee can reduce the activity of the bacteria responsible for causing bad breath and block it from developing odor. It is one more reason to wake up and smell the coffee.

Coffee stops bad breath

Researchers from Israel's Tel Aviv University examined the impact of coffee on bad breath or halitosis in an in-vitro saliva test at their laboratory. In the study, saliva samples were mixed with coffee extracts from three different brands: Israel's Elite brand, Landwer Turkish coffee and American Taster's Choice.

The team monitored the bacterial odor production of saliva after coffee. By using tools to measure the gas released by the bacteria, the researchers observed that all three types of coffee inhibited the release of gases that caused bad breath, sometimes to 90 percent or more.

Mel Rosenberg, chief researcher who has spent two decades studying and treating halitosis, said, "Everybody thinks that coffee causes bad breath. And it's often true, because coffee, which has a dehydrating effect in the mouth, becomes potent when mixed with milk and can ferment into smelly substances. But contrary to our expectations, we found that some components in coffee actually inhibit bad breath."

The findings were presented last month at the International Society for Breath Odor Research in Germany.

Causes of Halitosis

Halitosis may be related to a variety of causes, including foods, bacterial infections and medications, Wang Zuoming, a senior physician at the Stomatological Department of Chaoyang Hospital, said.

1. Certain foods

Certain foods have a reputation for causing bad breath. Two of the most notorious are garlic and onions. "When we eat, our digestive system breaks the food into its component molecules, some of which have very unpleasant odors. As our blood travels through our lungs, some of these molecules will be released into them. When we exhale, our breath which contains some of these offending molecules, malodor is produced," Wang said.

2. Smoking

You are probably familiar with people who have "smoker's breath." "Even though the odor associated with smoking depends on a number of factors, a great part of it is directly related to the tar, nicotine and other foul-smelling substances derived from tobacco's smoke that accumulates on the smoker's teeth, tongue, cheeks and gums," Wang said.

Smoking has a drying effect on oral tissues. Decreased moisture in the mouth limits the washing and buffering effect of saliva on oral bacteria and its waste products, thus aggravating bad breath, she said.

3. Dry mouth

You will probably notice that your breath is unpleasant when you first wake up. During the night, a person's mouth dries up somewhat, due to the human body's natural tendency to reduce salivary flow during sleep. This same effect occurs after extended periods of speaking.

"Saliva is a very special form of mouth moisture. It's the body's natural mouth

rinse," she said. Beyond the washing and diluting effect that any oral moisture can provide, saliva has the added benefit of compounds that can kill bacteria and buffer their waste products. When the mouth dries out, it loses the benefits provided by each source of oral moisture.

4. Periodontal disease

Periodontal disease is one of the most common causes of bad breath. The disease is a bacterial infection in the tissues that surround the teeth. As bone damage occurs, pockets form between the teeth and gums. "These pockets provide an ideal location for bacteria to live in. They are often so deep that people cannot effectively cleanse them," she said.

5. Sinus conditions

Upper respiratory infections and allergies can create postnasal drips that collect on the back of the tongue. This discharge often has a foul taste and smell. What's worse, oral bacteria will feed upon this discharge and create their own smelly waste products, compounding the problem.

6. Untreated medical conditions

If bad breath persists after a visit to the dentist and the usual simple treatments, then it is time to consult a medical doctor. There may be a sign of a more serious problem or an infection like diabetes, liver, kidney or stomach and intestinal disease, she said.

7. Dentures

Dentures can have a big influence on the quality of a person's breath. While the most common cause of bad breath is the accumulation of bacteria either on the tongue or on and around the teeth, bacteria can and does accumulate on the surface of dentures and this can be a source of bad odor.

Good habits keep halitosis at bay

Bad breath may affect how you feel about yourself and how others feel about you. Follow the tips below for fresher breath:

1. Brush and floss: Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste. Do not forget the tongue. Bad breath can be reduced 70 percent by brushing the tongue, especially the back of the tongue. Brushing removes smelly bacteria that build up in the mouth. Flossing is must, since it removes hidden food particles and plaque.

2. Gargle everyday: Gargling with peroxide will keep bad breath at bay. The bacteria that causes bad breath is killed by the oxygen in hydrogen peroxide. You can also use an antimicrobial mouthwash to remove excess plaque.

3. Drink lots of water: A dry mouth with reduced saliva is a breeding ground for bad breath, so stay hydrated. "The presence of oral fluids encourages us to swal-

low. With each swallow we wash away bacteria, as well as the food and debris on which they feed. It also dilutes and washes away the waste products that oral bacteria produce," the doctor said.

4. Stomach upset: An upset stomach can cause bad breath. Eating lots of antacids may ease an acidic stomach, but can cause halitosis when you burp. Try lactase tablets and eat healthy.

5. Eat plenty of yogurt: Yogurt promotes a healthier mouth and encourages the growth of good bacteria in your gut. Eat parsley or celery between meals for fresher breath.

6. Chew gum: Chewing gum with xylitol will keep your breath fresh and promote salivation. Saliva helps wash away bad bacteria in your mouth.

7. Visit your dentist: Have an appointment with your dentist every six months. Get your teeth checked and have an oral exam.

CFP Photo



An autumn among the clouds

A visit to Qingdao's coastal Laoshan Mountain



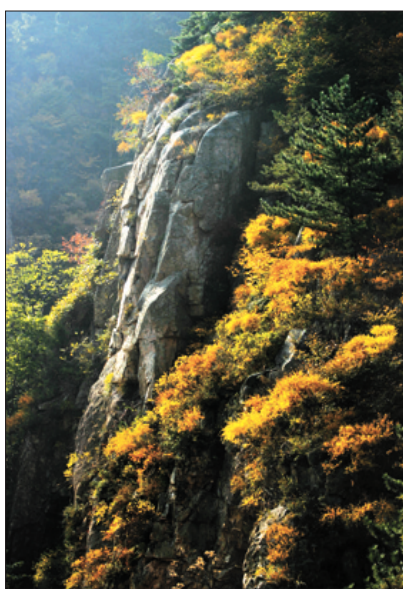
By Anton Wang

September, sandwiched between scorching August and chilly October, is the perfect month to go mountain climbing. Beijingers looking for a challenge out of town can head to Laoshan Mountain, located on the eastern side of Qingdao, Shandong Province, facing the Yellow Sea.

The mountain, famous for its scenery and coastal landscape, forms part of the Laoshanshan Scenic Area, one of the country's first major scenic spots to receive the State Council's endorsement. It holds an important place in Qingdao's vibrant tourism industry.



Chaoyin Waterfall



Laoshan Mountain in autumn

North Laoshan Mountain

Locals think the view on the mountain's north side is lovelier than that of the south since plants grow better on the north.

Its most beautiful area is called Beijiushui, or North Nine Waters, Scenic Spot. The name is derived from the fact that Baisha River, which runs through Laoshan Mountain, curves nine times. The river is formed by a spring that flows to the valley from a height of 1 kilometer. At Beijiushui, the river current is swift; further on, it flows more slowly.

Every corner of Beijiushui reveals an astonishing sight that residents have nicknamed it "the Jiushui Gallery." Dotting the banks are flowers, trees and rocks, which emphasize the water's elegance.

Eighteen ponds were also constructed along the water's path, such as Deyu (Catching Fish) Pond and Deyi (Delight) Pond. The names evoke poetic imagery, which unite the beauty of landscapes and Taoism's reverence for nature.

Chaoyin Waterfall is Beijiushui's most popular attraction. During the rainy season, it is a majestic sight: the water crashes against the rocks on the mountainside, producing a powerful sound like waves crashing against the seashore.

An autumn day with blue skies and light clouds is the best time to see Beijiushui. Travelers should check out the spot's remarkable peaks and breathtaking cliffs – an antidote to the meaningless worries of city life.

Moon-lit nights at the scenic spot are also amazing. The mountain is still, devoid of human sounds; a multitude of stars look down from the sky; now and again fireflies come flying out of the trees.

North Laoshan Mountain's Jufeng Tourist Area is also worth a visit. It encircles Jufeng, the mountain's highest peak at 1,133 meters above sea level, and is known as the country's best seaside mountain. Here, tourists can have a bird's-eye view of the undulating land and get a sea-misty view of sunrise.

Continued on page 21...

On top of the mountain, tourists can have a bird's-eye view of the land and the sea in Qingdao. CFP Photos



... continued from page 20

South Laoshan Mountain

The mountain's south side, not far from the sea, is known for its historical and cultural sites, rather than its scenery.

Legends describe Laoshan Mountain as a place of mystery and wonder, and it is regarded as a home of immortals. It is said that the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC) once came to visit supernatural beings in search of an elixir. A huge rock inscribed with the words "waves blending into the sky" is supposedly where the emperor once stood on the mountain.

Laoshan became a Taoist shrine during the Song Dynasty (960-1279) and the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). During Taoism's peak, there were reportedly nine palaces, eight temples and 72 nunneries on the mountain; thousands of devotees visited every year.

Taiqing Palace Temple, also called Genghis Khan's Supreme Purity Temple, is the mountain's largest and oldest Taoist temple, going back 2,000 years. It began construction during the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC – 25 AD), and reached its current size – 140 buildings – during the Song Dynasty.

The temple is well-preserved and is a model of Song Dynasty architecture – quite rare among the country's religious structures.

Taiqing is made up of three halls. The main one is Three Purity (Sanqing) Hall, which honors the highest deity in Taoism. The other two halls are called Three Officials (Sanguan) and Three Emperors (Sanhuang). The latter is surrounded by towering cypresses two millennia old.

In front of Sanguan Hall is a 700-year-old camellia shrub. At 8.5 meters tall and 1.78 meters around the trunk, it is among the largest camellias in the world. When it blooms in midwinter, its flowers look like deep red snow among green leaves.

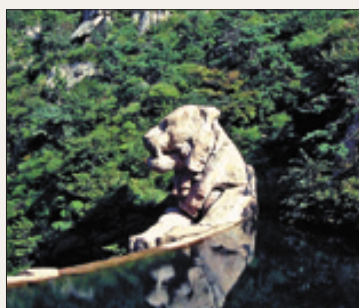
Pu Songling, a renowned novelist of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), lived in Taiqing during his twilight years. Many stories in his novel *Strange Tales from a Lonely Studio* are set on Laoshan Mountain, including his most famous "Fragrant Jade" and "The Taoist of Laoshan Mountain."



Baiyun Cave on Laoshan Mountain



Taiqing Palace Temple



Stone-carved tiger

Photo by Anton



An ancient tree in Taiqing Palace Temple

Travel information

Accommodation

The scenic area has many hotels, most of which charge 30 to 50 yuan per person for a night.

Getting there

The easiest way to reach Qingdao is by China Railway High-speed (CRH) train. It departs Beijing every two hours from 6 am to 5 pm every day. The journey takes about six hours.

Beijiushui: Catch Bus 311 at the railway station or the ferry terminal (between 6:45 and 4:40 pm). Visitors can also hop on Bus 107 from 8 am to 4 pm at a village called Licun, or a tour bus from 7 to 10:30 am at Huaneng Square.

Taiqing Palace Temple: Get on Bus 304 at the railway station or the ferry terminal

(from 6:30 am to 5:00 pm). There's also Bus 106, which is available in Licun from 7:15 am to 4:20 pm.

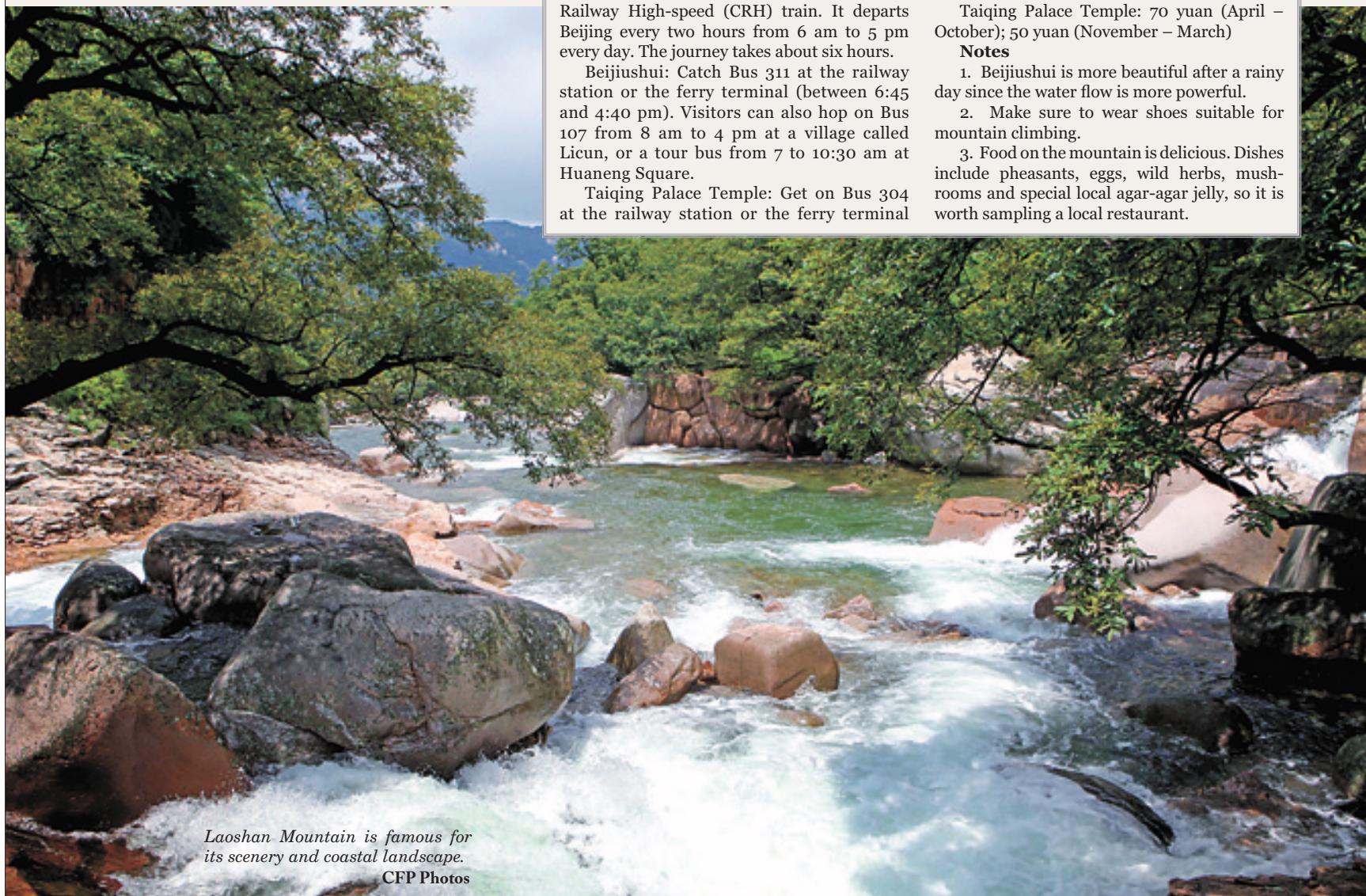
Admission

Beijiushui Scenic Spot: 50 yuan (April – October); 30 yuan (November – March)

Taiqing Palace Temple: 70 yuan (April – October); 50 yuan (November – March)

Notes

1. Beijiushui is more beautiful after a rainy day since the water flow is more powerful.
2. Make sure to wear shoes suitable for mountain climbing.
3. Food on the mountain is delicious. Dishes include pheasants, eggs, wild herbs, mushrooms and special local agar-agar jelly, so it is worth sampling a local restaurant.



Laoshan Mountain is famous for its scenery and coastal landscape.
CFP Photos

Dining

New menu



Discover the delicious flavors created by Yannick Ehram, chef de cuisine of Le Pre Lenotre French Gastronomic Restaurant. The exquisite a la carte menu blends genuine creativity and choice ingredients. The use of fresh ingredients allows the chef to offer a menu that caters to the calorie conscious. The exquisite selection includes king crab and caviar, oyster, scallops and Dublin Bay prawn.

Where: Le Pre Lenotre, Sofitel Wanda Beijing, 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 8599 6666

Celebrate Mid-Autumn at The Regent

The Regent Beijing has crafted a series of moon cake delights with traditional recipes and authentic fillings. The cakes are specially packaged and feature festive colors and lucky clouds that symbolize blessings and harmony. A perfect gift for family and business associates who want to share this joyful festival.

Where: The Regent Beijing, 99 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

Cost: 238 yuan per box (Elegant), 188 yuan per box (Classic), 78 yuan per box (special), subject to 15 percent service charge

Tel: 8522 1999 ext. 3621

FAME House Live Party



Get ready for a visit by Romantic Couch, Korea's most popular house band. Formed by Ji Hae Kim in 2004, Romantic Couch has been a pioneer in the Korean electronic music scene for the last decade, especially in Japan. The band will perform its first show in Beijing at Zeta during a rare House Live Party.

Where: Zeta Bar, Hilton Beijing, 1 Dongfang Lu, Chaoyang District

When: September 12, 9 pm onward

Tel: 5865 5030

Oktoberfest Festival



Crowne Plaza Park View Wuzhou Beijing proudly presents its sixth Oktoberfest. Entertainment will be Munchner Musikanten, the famous six-piece German band. Enjoy Bavarian specialties and Chinese delights at the buffet. Stay for unlimited Carlsberg Beer and soft drinks and a raffle with fabulous prizes.

Where: Crowne Plaza Park View Wuzhou Beijing, 8 Beichen Dong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: September 21-26, 6-11 pm

Cost: 298 yuan net per person

Tel: 8498 2288 ext. 7204

The Daily Menuboard at French Bistro



Starting September, The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel will serve its Daily Menuboard at the French Bistro. Each day, Executive Chef Hans Gorsler will select three appetizers, three entrees and two desserts to suit the season. Dishes will use the finest meats and vegetables that are in season. Gorsler will personalize entrees to suit each customer's taste to ensure a memorable dining experience.

Where: The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing, 10 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Monday – Saturday, 6-10:30 pm

Tel: 6590 5566 ext. 2119

Tourism

Historic Vrana oil press on Lesvos reopens as Industrial Museum

The old Vrana Oil Press on the island of Lesvos, Greece, was inaugurated as an industrial museum after extensive restoration. It is one of the first steam-powered factories from the industrial revolution of Lesvos. Archipelagos handled the restoration.

Both the premises and the machinery have been restored, including the rare Tangye diesel machine, one of only seven in the world. Also, its 112 accounting books comprise one of the most complete and rarest archives on olive oil production in Greece today.

Hotel

Shangri-La Hotels open 28th China hotel

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts recently opened the Shangri-La Hotel Ningbo, its third property in Zhejiang Province after the Shangri-La Hangzhou and Shangri-La Wenzhou. This latest hotel boosts its mainland portfolio to include 27 hotels.

To celebrate the opening of Shangri-La Hotel Ningbo, an introductory rate of 818 yuan per night is available for single or double occupancy in a deluxe room, including daily breakfast. The rate is subject to a 15 percent surcharge.

Tel: 0574 8799 8888

New manager at Grand Hyatt Beijing, Oriental Plaza

Malcolm Zancanaro has been appointed manager of the Grand Hyatt Beijing at Oriental Plaza. Malcolm worked for Hyatt for 18 years. He worked at the Hyatts in Sydney, Sanctuary Cove, Melbourne and Perth prior to becoming the executive assistant manager of food and beverages at the Grand Hyatt Shanghai in 2004. Last year, Malcolm was appointed director of food and beverages at the regional office in Hong Kong.

Shangri-La's Kerry Centre Hotel receives top awards

Hurun Presidential Awards was recognized Shangri-La's Kerry Centre Hotel Beijing for Top Presidential Suite, Top Executive Suite, Top Executive Club Lounge and Beijing's Best Swimming Pool. The ceremony was held at MOMA, where Johnson Wong, general manager, and Sor Hoon Lim, director of sales and marketing, proudly received the trophies and certificate.



Mid-Autumn Festival

Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing has exclusive healthy and low-fat moon cakes. A variety of enticing flavors are available to share with your friends and relatives, and to present as a gift to express your appreciation. The Park Plaza is dedicated to bringing reunion and happiness to you this Mid-Autumn Festival.

Where: Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing Hotel, 97 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

Cost: 158 yuan per box (Lunar Eulogy), 188 yuan per box (Enticing Aroma), subject to 15 percent service charge

Tel: 8522 1999 ext. 3621

Aviation

New General Manager for Greater China

With a wealth of experience in the aviation industry, Frederic Kahane has taken over the position of general manager of Greater China at AIR FRANCE KLM. His predecessor was Frank Legre. Prior to his appointment, he was the general manager for Belgium and Luxembourg.

SilkAir launches international online photo contest

SilkAir is calling all photographers to take part in the SilkAir Destinations Photography Competition. Launched worldwide, the online competition at silkairphotocontest.com invites entrants to submit photographs taken at any of SilkAir's 31 destinations. The airline encourages participants to discover the beauty and uniqueness of all the destinations it flies to.

Entries should be submitted electronically between midnight August 24 and midnight December 24. Photos can be in color or black-and-white, shot either with a digital camera or with conventional film. Contest is open to both amateurs and professionals.

British Airways offers special fares to the UK

British Airways announced a great value-for-money offer for travelers flying from Beijing or Shanghai to the UK. Customers who book a World Traveler economy return ticket on ba.com before September 30 will enjoy special fares starting from 3,380 yuan.

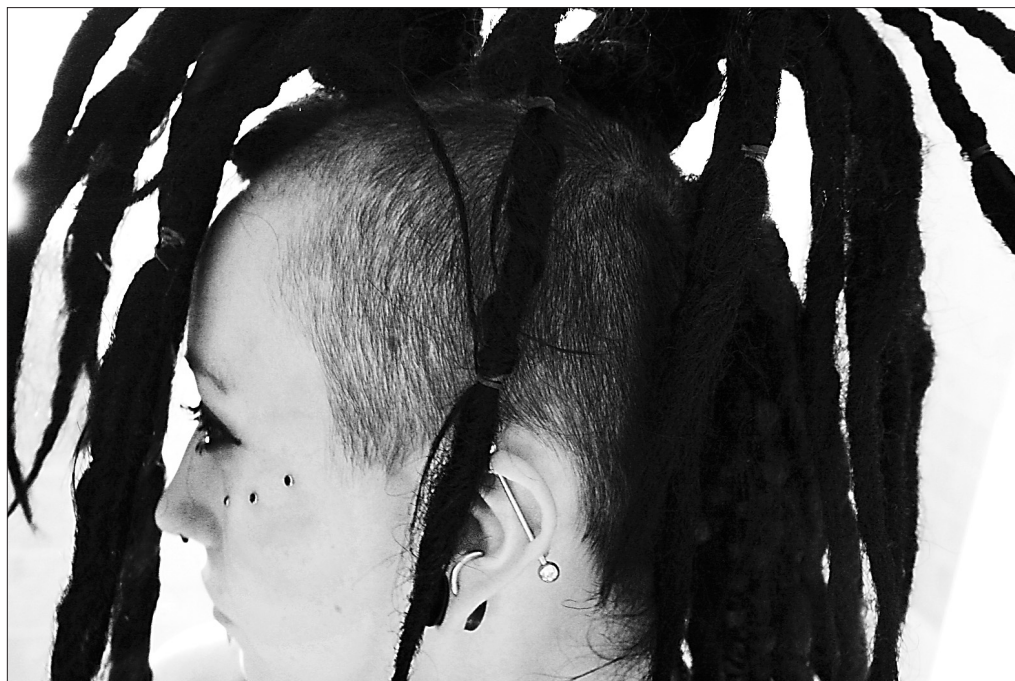
The offer is valid for departure from Beijing or Shanghai between October 4, 2009 and March 31, 2010. Passengers can pay an extra 2,000 yuan to receive a one-way upgrade to World Traveler Plus premium economy class.

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Let your hair down



By Han Manman

Candy is still trying to understand how things went so wrong at work. As an employee at a foreign company, she understands the unwritten rules of office politics, particularly the one about not gossiping about bosses and colleagues.

This attitude, on top of her hard work, is the reason she has lasted in the firm for 10 years. Meanwhile, many people in the office have come and gone because of their involvement in work politics.

Three months ago, her quiet life changed when her boss retired. Her new boss Jason did not seem to trust her skills, and kept assigning her tasks to Lisa, one of her subordinates. In Candy's opinion, the only thing going for the woman was her good looks.

Candy's colleagues began whispering about her, saying that in time, Lisa would surely take her place.

After months of this unbearable situation, Candy finally decided to act. She made an appointment to see Edward, Jason's boss and the compa-

ny's vice president.

"Sir, I need to make a report," Candy said the moment she entered Edward's office. "I'm sorry for interrupting your busy schedule, but I've noticed that my immediate superior has a prejudice toward me. I don't know what I did, but I believe it's undeserved treatment for my years of loyalty and hard work to this company." Candy hid her hurt behind a mask of formality.

"Let your hair down for a moment," Edward said while pulling up a chair for Candy.

"Huh?" Candy touched her hair, which was often tied in a bun.

"Let your hair down. Relax," he said with a smile.

Candy's mind began working overtime at the uncharacteristic suggestion. She became nervous. Is Edward involved in some dirty office practices I do not know about? What should I do? she desperately prayed.

She knew it would be the end of her career, but she let the words out: "I really respect you, Edward, but I can't.

I'm sorry, I'm not that kind of woman."

"What are you taking about?" he said.

"After I put down my hair, what's next, my coat?" she said, her voice shaking.

The company vice president was speechless for a second, then he burst into laughter. "I meant take it easy, no need to be so formal with me," he explained. "I'm not into funny office business," he said with a grin to relax her.

Candy felt so embarrassed. If there was a way to aggravate the situation at work, she just did it.

"Now, tell me what happen to you," Edward said. Candy told him about Jason's cold attitude toward her and about her tasks getting passed on to Lisa.

A week later, Candy received a memo from Jason stating that in a week, she would be transferred to another department. She knew this was an indirect way of saying he wanted her resignation letter.

At that moment, she was reminded of the corporate world's most important rule: never ever complain about your boss to his boss.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

1. There are a variety of reasons foreigners come to China for jobs.

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): When "reason" is a noun, it means a cause or a motive for an action or feeling. In this sentence, there must be "why" following the word "reason." It functions as an attending attributive clause modifying "reason." Another example: There is no reason why she is late for the appointment. However, if you wish to avoid using "why," you may use the pattern of "reason for." You may say: There are a variety of reasons for foreigners to come to China for jobs.

Native speaker Steven Sandor (SS): While in formal writing it is probably better to add the missing "why," the word is regularly cut in speech. More people would say, "Dropping that 'why' is the reason I finished talking first."

The "why" is already understood, because what else could follow? Any word that can be removed is usually edited out: the superfluous "why" is a prime candidate for the chopping block.

2. They are the same as us.

ZS: There will be much argument about this sentence. Could you say it is wrong? No. It is being used by millions of people. It is colloquialism. It is all right in daily conversation. But, in standard English, we'd better follow the standard grammatical rule to say: They are the same as we (are). This reminds me of the usage "It's me." People do say in their conversations "It's her, It's us. The formal English should be: It's I, It's she, It's we. However, the former is fairly established on the conversational level in America and Great Britain. Speakers use more the locution "It's me" than "It's her, It's us."

SS: Strictly speaking, the professor is correct. You would never want to make this mistake when writing for a formal publication. But formality does have to step out of the way of actual usage. Compare the rarely heard "It is we against them" to the oft heard "It is us against them."

3. Oppenheimer grew up in a wealthy family, giving him opportunity to experiment.

ZS: This is careless dangling. Can you discern where it is wrong? Try your wits and all the grammatical knowledge you have acquired. Let's analyze this sentence. The main clause is all right: Oppenheimer grew up in a wealthy family. The problem lies with the clause of consequence. The subject is Oppenheimer. OK. Can Oppenheimer give him opportunity to experiment? Obviously not. It is the wealthy family that provides him with opportunities to experiment. Correct it as, "Oppenheimer grew up in a wealthy family. This gave him opportunity to experiment." If you really wish to have a gerund clause, you will have to say: Oppenheimer grew up in a wealthy family, having great access to finances means to experiment.

SS: Another way to revise this dangling modifier is to move the dangling phrase into the main clause: Oppenheimer had opportunity to experiment because he grew up in a wealthy family.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Memory of sweetness and sourness
By Tiffany Tan

I wanted to indulge my sweet tooth on a recent trip to the neighborhood grocery, so I decided to check out the cookie aisle. I saw two rows of biscuit sticks with fillings in eight different flavors.

I was agonizing whether to get the green tea or the tiramisu one when some lines of "poetry" on another box caught my eye: "Soft and smooth, like bathing in the sun on the Aegean Sea, is the taste from the Greek cheese myth." This was the description for the Cheesecake flavor.

If the manufacturers saw what they wrote in English, I'm sure they would

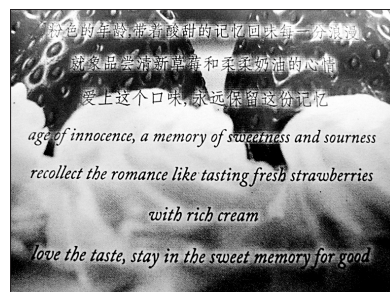


Photo by Tiffany Tan

not have wanted their snack's great taste to be labeled a "myth," which can mean "imaginary." The Chinese word used was *shenhua*; it would have

been better translated as "legendary" Greek cheese.

On the row below was the strawberry and vanilla flavor, which carried these lines: "Age of innocence, a memory of sweetness and sourness, recollect the romance like tasting fresh strawberries with rich cream ..." Sweet and sour memories? The phrase is a direct translation of *suantian de jiyi*, and has a very Chinese ring to it, like some Chinese dish, but "bittersweet memories" is really what you want to say.

But I got so attached to "sweet and sour" that I ended up buying the strawberry vanilla flavor that I did not even like.



Scene 1

(Carl gets on the boat and meets Quentin for the first time.)

Quentin (Q): Enter. Carl?

Carl (C): Yes.

Q: My favorite godson ... Have we met before?

C: I don't think so.

Q: No. There was a lost decade, so I always have to check. How's your mum?

C: She's fine. Not over-fond of (1) me at the moment.

Q: She's a very attractive woman.

C: Well, I ...

Q: No, seriously. I mean, to you, she's your mum, but to people of my age, she's a sexual legend. So ... expelled?

C: That's right.

Q: What for?

C: I suppose smoking was the clincher (2).

Q: Drugs or cigarettes?

C: Well, both.

Q: Well done. Proud of you. So your mum sent you here in hopes that a little bracing sea air would sort you out (3)?

C: Something like that.

Q: Spectacular mistake. But, if you don't drown, we can at least help you to give up smoking and drug-taking. I just have and I feel so much better for it ... Cigarette?

C: No, thank you.

Q: Spliff?



Scene 2

(Quentin makes an announcement about the return of Gavin Kavanagh.)

Q: I have a very important announcement. As you may know there has been a serious squeeze put on our advertisers by Her Majesty's Government. This chart ... thank you, John, displays what's been happening to our advertising revenue in the last few weeks. So, I've had to stir myself from (4) my traditional languor and do something to make the station more attractive to new commercial partners.

Two years ago, something terrible happened, and we lost the greatest DJ pirate radio has ever known to America, ambition, and alcoholic poisoning. And then something wonderful happened and we got, in return, from America, a man who proved more than capable of filling those enormous shoes (5).

The Count (T): I do my humble best.

Q: And now, my friends, I have good news. Very good news. Three weeks from today, Gavin Kavanagh returns to rock on Radio Rock.

Scene 3

(The radio station has to be closed due to the government's policy, the Count talks about his love of the radio with Carl.)

T: Carl.

C: You okay?

T: Yeah, just ... You know, a few months ago, I made a terrible mistake.

C: Really?

T: Yeah. But I realized something. And instead of crushing the thought (6) the moment it came I ... I let it hang on and ... Now I know it to be true. And I'm afraid it's stuck in my head forever.

C: What was the thought?

T: That these are the best days of our lives. It's a terrible thing to know, but I know it.

C: I don't know about that.

T: Well, yeah. Yeah. Maybe you'll be lucky. Maybe you'll have better days, but I doubt it. We stood on top of the mountain, compadre (7). It's a long way do-be-do-be down.



Vocabulary

1. **not over-fond of:** to dislike
2. **clincher:** a decisive factor
3. **sort someone out:** to deal with a person, especially an awkward one
4. **stir someone from:** to move about actively; bestir oneself
5. **filling the shoes:** fill the blank
6. **crush the thought:** bring out the thought
7. **compadre:** a close friend or associate; a companion

(By Wang Yu)

The Boat That Rocked (2009)

Movie of the week

1966 was the greatest year for British rock: the Beatles, the Kinks and the Who took the stage. This brilliant movie tells the story of another group of rock stars in front of the microphones – the DJs. If you are not familiar with classic rock, this movie offers a great first lesson. Director Richard Curtis rarely disappoints with such comedies as *Mr. Bean*, *Notting Hill* and *Love Actually* to his credit. Philip Seymour Hoffman was a delight and stood out as a fantastic actor despite the exceptional cast of Rhys Ifans, one of the most popular DJs and a retired rocker, Bill Nighy, Emma Thompson and Kenneth Branagh.

Synopsis

The movie is about a band of rogue DJs that captivated Britain, playing music that defined a generation and standing up to a government that, incomprehensibly, preferred jazz. The Count is a big, brash, American god of the airwaves. Quentin is the boss of Radio Rock, a pirate radio station in the middle of the North Sea that's populated by an eclectic crew of rock and roll DJs. Gavin, the greatest DJ in Britain, has just returned from his drug tour of America to reclaim his rightful position. Dave is an ironic, intelligent and cruelly funny co-broadcaster and a fearsome government official out for blood against the drug takers and lawbreakers of a once-great nation.

